



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



HN 1166 S

A DREAM

J. C. Richmond

100 13250

A DREAM.

AN EPIC POEM.

BY

JOSEPH CARVER ROBINSON.

J. C. ROBINSON, PUBLISHER,

34 BROAD ST., BOSTON, MASS.

KD 13250



Copyright, 1880,
BY JOSEPH CARVER ROBINSON,
BOSTON, MASS.

Electrotyped and Printed by
ADDISON C. GETCHELL, BOSTON, MASS.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

For fear some evil minded person might wantonly misconstrue my flights of fancy, wherein I have that power, Monopoly, seize on creation, as being irreverent, I will say I cast no slighting reflections on the Omnipotent; but I wish to show what vast proportions a Monopoly would assume if not alone confined to our little world of sufferance.

This work was printed for private distribution, but having several hundred copies in excess of my pleasure to distribute as a private edition, I offer them to the public.

J. C. ROBINSON.

As in this poem I have pictured the future of Monopoly, I would respectfully dedicate it to the Independent Oil Man and to all those whose sympathy and efforts go forth to oppose and crush out Monopoly from our midst.

J. C. R.

A DREAM.

A WONDROUS dream my mind conceived,
at first

It gave me joy beyond all hope. There seemed
No bound of perfect bliss that mind could draw
So fair as this ; the darkest night was turned
To day, and Heaven's sylvan shades and nooks
Were enwrapped by gold'n streams of living
brooks.

Then, there were no pains in the depths of Hell
As did my troubled soul indwell.

I dreamed I'd turned the world into a fount
Of Oil, and wov'n the silken stream of gold

And green into vast wealth, by a long
Continuous dream.

My greedy mind, with ease
Expanded to the work, until rivers
That used to be, turned to Oil. So all waters,
Even the sea !

Methought the world's last days had come ; the
race

Of struggling man was run. Had not the Lord
My soul giv'n strength, the troubled horrors
That reached me from the very highest peaks
Where suffering humanity had scaled,
I should have lost heart and let slip my soul
From its mortal part, such dire horrors mocked
me !

I trembling stood, as one dumb-bound.
Here, struggling in the sea, a doomed life,
Buff'ting the dark'ned stream with lusty sinews,

Fighting in vain 'gainst death. There, men of
sin,
Half-demon, half-dev'l, who through life were
hunted,
Hated, and outlawed, pleading for the boon
That had made them miserable !

Amid human wail this small speck of earth
In blackened space whirled as a great Oil Bub-
ble,
Drowning man in his sin. As I alone reigned
Supreme on this gold'n wave, a smiling greed
Filled my brain. I forgot the horrors I'd seen,
And gloated o'er my Oily Sea of wealth,
This translucent liquid of living green.

The world was mine ! All this great Oil Bub-
ble !
My countless wealth now seemed most secure,
As humanity no longer did endure.

I'd heard their last groans and seen their death-
throes ;

They'd sunk beneath the waves to death ; the
waves

Obliterated the scene of doom,

Leaving no trace to mark their tomb.

I stood monarch of all this vast plain ;

Was the rich harvest worth the lives I'd slain ?

Yes ! why not ? I'd crushed a mortal foe's de-
sire,

And quenched in them a most rebellious fire.

Rid the world of sin by sacrificing blood,

Merely rep'tition of another flood.

Ha ! ha ! they were loth to swamp in my spoil,

If their souls were light they could swim in Oil.

How quickly they shot to the core of Hell !

For them, a fitter place there's none to dwell.

Then, an awful stillness fill'd the heavy air.

In this death-like quiet my bark drifted

As a thing of ease ; so still one scarce could
Hear the rippling of the seas ; erewhile,
The frantic shrieks of man nigh drove me
mad —

Now the awful silence seemed quite as bad.

“ But why disheartened ? ” I asked myself.
“ I have caused misery without pity :
I’ve crushed Titusville, Bradford, Oil City —
Hundreds of towns by honest toil that reared
Their heads from the product of Oil. I took
Millions from the land and left it as bare
As a babe’s hand ; took the substance of the earth
And put it into my purse ; I blighted
The country as with a curse, without one
Pang of remorse.”

When the people
Had no woe, they were thoughtless of the mor-
row.

This was the time I laid my plans to pluck
The joy from the heart of man, thus reaping
Their harvest, by a sharp turn, that they'd
 toiled
For years to earn.

'Twas the clinking
Of the drill in
The flinty rock,
And the genius
Of a Drake gave
The world a shock.

I loved the doleful sound of the walking-beam,
As it echoed over wood and vale and stream.
I loved the rustic scenes of long ago,
The hills that spouted Oil in steady flow.

Methinks I hear the sound of jar, and thud
Of drill ; note the running of the sand-reel.

I hear the sand-pump in the well below ;
(This sand-pumping, Oil unto me doth show.)
Hear the rattling of the bull-wheel, letting
The tools down the well. See! the walking-
beam

Is lowered, and the temper-screw is set,
Driller at his post, but work's not moving
Yet. Now the walking-beam is in motion!
Up and down it goes, drilling the soft rock
And the hard, till into the Oil-sand it goes.

I hear the sound of gas from below,
Hear the pent-up force in the earth
Now getting ready for a flow.
A gusher's soon to have its birth.

See the rope and tools outward fly!
On, through the spray of gas and Oil,
Leaping upward towards the sky,
I see the startled son of toil, —

Joining pipe ne'er fail ;
In the tank Oil flows
Spouting like a whale
Every time it blows.

See the golden cream
To the surface rise,
Sparkling like a beam
Coming from the skies.

Whatever pow'r used, whatever mode of toil,
The people still produced a flood of Oil.
Year by year they wrought hand and heart with
toil,
Their wealth was mine ; 'twas all for me their
spoil.

As the moth in the candle's light e'er finds
Certain doom, so, unto the " Oil-man " did
The Exchange prove his financial tomb.

The Refiners gave what I demanded,
Reluctant ; they'd little money to spare.
They'd say " Advance of freight takes the profits,
And scarcely leaves a cent in our pockets."

I used to keep their nose to the grindstone,
Filch from their purse, and squeeze from them
groan,
This, man might say was "cruel." Perhaps
'twas,
But it pleased me ; 'twas the way I had to draw
From them a fee.

The Producers made consolidated efforts
To protect themselves against my power ;
Ev'ry attempt they made was damaging
To their success and beneficial to mine.
This one man power is great ; one need not
spend

His efforts in contending against his
Own element, but can send his combined
Strength into the enemy's camp, who
At the best are divided in opinions.
I could always discover their weakest points,
And, like as a successful general
Conquers his foe, I would break down all
Opposing opposition, and throttle
The Producers' movements by the hand
Of Monopoly.

On this Sea of Oil I floated in my dream,
I loved this sea for which I'd worked my
scheme.
I had now no toil, no care to guard.

As in this blissful mood I lay,
The green wave undulating as a thing
Of life, —
I felt not, nor cared not, for what had been ;

I felt ne'er a pang for committing sin.
On I flew ! My ship rode like a cork
Through gold'n glimmering beams of moon-lit
seas,

While the Oily wave with its gentle swell
Would repel any storm that time could foretell.
No power (save Heaven) that was afloat
Could wreck my craft or harm my boat. Me-
thought,

"I'm blest ; the Great Power above protects
me,

Although, alas, His punishment severe
Has fall'n on mine enemies, who are writhing
In torture beneath me."

Lo ! now light as winged mist, so white the
locks

And beard that swung to the breeze as wave's
crest ;

At his right side, jewelled set, a golden

Key he wore, while in his hand a crooked
Staff he bore ; two wings, di'mond hinged, from
his

Back protruding ; thus St. Peter from out
The gates of Heaven to me forth came.
St. Peter gave his hand to me,
And straight bore me on through the yielding
air,

Up, up past the Archipel'gos of stars
To the verdant rivage of the crystal
Ocean.

The burst of a new being filled my soul,
A pure unfoldment of a better life.
Angels sang sweet songs as they floated amid
Feathery clouds ; all Heaven's consort
Commixed and commingled without discord.
Obedient to her laws we drifted
Through a melodious chorus with spherical
Accuracy, subject to one great law ;

All law being subject to us ; with our souls
Attuned unto all things, all things attuned
To our souls, a dulcet finish was giv'n
To Heaven's symphony.

Years appeared to pass like soft music
In this melodious dream ; all timing
With my ev'ry wish ; from day to day, each
Gentler hour seemed enkindling within me
A new life, increasing ever in joy.
With greed I feasted upon each fleeting
Moment, ever reluctant to let it pass ;
Passing, always left my cup overcharged
With new sweets. Now all sins of earth seemed
 purged,
And naught was left but the purest
Gems of soul, whose precious liquid drops
 caused
But sweetest bliss that crowned my ev'ry
 thought.

The birth of my new being
Gave unto me such ravishing delight,
I could but think Heav'n (though but on its
verge)
Held but little more happiness for me,
So supreme was my bliss.

How majestic the hills crowned
The winding meads, terrace o'er terrace, reach-
ing
Up until the blue expanse of Heaven
Was as a bower of ravishing sweets.
With such seraphic forms the place did teem
It entranced all my sense in this fair dream.
Angels roamed beneath Heaven's sunlit trees,
And with joy sported o'er the fragrant leas.

No care, no thought of gold, or greed of gain
Possessed me, as I gazed o'er this heav'nly plain.
All these charming scenes to me were as truth.

Here feeble age again renewed its youth :
For here the Universe, the great Fountain
Of all life !

As I, entranced, gazed around, St. Peter
Unto me thus spoke :

“ Man, wonder not at this, nor yet do dote,
For far in the realms of the God of Light,
Far reaching, far beyond thy spirit's sight,
Yes, so far beyond thy picturing mind
As thy flooded earth from the farth'rest star ;
So far that the star's light could never shine
In myr'ads of years on that world of thine ;
So far that but the purest souls could trace
The soft ether depths of eternal space,
There the sov'reign spirit of Life doth dwell,
Self-made and self-formed by some mighty
spell !

A rad'ant centre 'round which just souls move,
Ay, a perfect haven of peace and love.

There the records of holy lives are scrolled ;
There may the righteous enjoy bliss untold."

From my seat in Heaven, how glorious
To peer through the infinite space all jewelled
With sky-flowers,
And note the harmony, the grandeur
Of the Omnipotent !

" Casting visual nerve
Askance," the orbs in space whose rays of light
From billions of years down to a second
It takes to reach the earth, drew my scenic
To a focus. By looking from the stars
In their sev'ral magnitudes, each in turn,
All of which I could command from my seat
In Heaven, and by so connecting them
With spirit eye to convey sight as does
Telephone sound to the ear, I could trace
All events of earth, from the fall of man

Down to the coming of the second flood.
In a twinkle I could compass the world's
History ; note its foundation source, and mark
The development of all 'vents thereon.

Time, to me was as nothing. A billion
Of years was but as a thought. All the earth
Was before me as a great book, wherein
I could trace the minutest details
Of man, bird, or beast.

As I from star to star noted the face
Of creation, I saw on my world, seas
Converted into deserts ; mountains and plains
Sunk beneath the wave. I saw my native land,
America, her hills pricking their heads
High above the waters, when all that now " is
Visible of Europe, save a few islands
Dotted here and there, was submerged ; " " while
America's coast line laid bare from

Nova Scotia to the far west," and the sun
Pregnant with life, conceiving on the uprising
Hills, grasses in copious green, fruits and flowers,
Europe was beneath the sea, peopled by
Finny tribes and perverse monsters of the deep.
"Fish swam o'er the face of Europe that the like
In man's history ne'er was seen," feasting
On the same grounds where kings and princesses
In all their regal sway have since banqueted.
The crocodiles, alligators, and snakes
Ugly coiled, first found shores in America
To bask in the sun. Here birds first chirped
their
Sweet notes from bending boughs. Before Eu-
rope
Saw the light of day America beat
And palpitated with life.

After this age of the world,
All blessed by God, I saw a change in earth's

Formation ; Asia, Africa, and Europe
Rose above the water's surface and were
Coupled with America by a neck of land,
Now forming the ocean bed. Then opened
Up to me the garden of Eden in all its
Unfoldments ; the creation of Adam and Eve !
It was a beauteous sight to see,
The birth of love in its primitive
Simplicity, wise counsel, strength, and tender
Care blended.

In converse close, beheld I
Adam and his lovely Eve ; list'ning intent,
Methought I heard Adam address Eve thus,
" Sweet companion of my joys, the way of
peace
And happiness is ours ; the path wherein
We tread determines the future state of man.
We have boundless scope, our will and way is
Unmolested and unforbidden, save

The fruitage of a choice tree herein planted
In our garden Eden to leave untouched ;
This fruitage, though sweet and knowledge giving,

If partaken of brings death and the curse of sin
Upon us and our seed. With jealous care
Thou flesh of mine I'll guide your steps far from
This tree ; together let us walk abroad
The works of creation to view. We being
The most perfect and God-like, His harvests
Are all for our comfort, yet judiciously
We must use them."

I traced this happy twain
Wandering far mid the rocks, trees, flowers,
And fruits of creation ravished by God's
Unfoldments of life and beauty, until
Adam, being weary from assisting
Eve through the virgin growth of tangled
Vegetable life, lay him down to rest ;

He, the while, giving a warning voice to Eve,
Saying, "Keep close within this bower,
At farthest go not beyond my voice's sound
For fear some evil one may be hereabout
Lurking, and with seductive art lure thee
On to sin."

"Fear not, dear Adam," said Eve. "The wisdom

Of your words has deep rooted in my heart,
And no lurking evil can entice me
From thy love and my fixed purpose to be
True unto thee." Time wafted on; during
The hours of Adam's God-like sleep, Eve
strayed

And fell; and that canker sin in the heart
Of man has been working ever since.

I traced the steps of primitive man;
Like as our pilgrim fathers fled their

Native heath under the scourge of religious
Persecution, so these children of the East
Fled deep into the wilds of then unknown
America, and worshipped their God then,
As we now, according to the dictates
Of conscience. They built their cabin sides of
mud,
And made dry their roofs by layers of bark ;
Their bunks, soft strewn with hemlock twigs,
made
Downy beds for the persecuted pilgrims.
They loved this land, new to them, this land of
bloom
And plenty. Rich the chase in deer and bear,
Sea and forest birds. Seas swarmed with fish
and furs ;
God's bounty was everywhere. It seemed
As if the hand of Providence guided them,
For as they were in the distance pursued
Across this neck of land by their foe,

The ocean changed the course of her mighty
Deep, shutting off communication by land,
Between America, with Europe, Asia,
And Africa, protecting these persecuted
Souls from farther pursuit. The land that bore
Verdure green in trees and vines, found a
wat'ry

Grave. Bowers of shading foliage
On whose boughs birds took shelter, hatched
their young,
Lay as grounds for shoals of fish to spawn and
feast.

In nooks where grew fruitage choice, were
pearly shells

About all strewn ; seaweed wove in webs 'bout
The trailing vines, while coral insects built
About the trees. Shut off by seas, the battles
Of the East could not harrass further these
Persecuted children. The great waters
Had opened their flood-gates, closing from them

Farther pursuit; they were free, and need bend
To no will save the Great Spirit's.

From other stars I saw the "waves
Of the Atlantic Ocean for ages
Beating against the shores of Africa
And Spain," that were ever wasting, wasting,
until

"The Straits of Gibraltar opened before them."
I saw Niagara Falls open its
Flood-gates near where Lewiston now stands,
And gradually recede year by year,
Eating its way back through thousands of years
Until it occupied its present site.

By looking from a star
(To reach the earth it took its light nineteen
Hundred years), — I could see that speck of
earth

In all its unfoldments, as it swung

In eternal space nineteen cent'ries 'go !
I there marked the fall of Jerusalem.
From other stars saw Christ striding the flood,
While his disciples were standing abashed
At the suspension of Nature's great laws,
And the accomplishment of this miracle.
I noted all wars as in a picture,
From savage barb'rians to the conflict
Of the Rebellion.

I saw the curse and glory in all ages
Of the world ! Vast and powerful empires,
Great monarchs and their resplendent courts ;
I saw clearly into all the secret
Workings of those huge pow'rs ; how to nourish
Their strength, and how best their opposing
Opposition to withstand.

I noted
The artistic Greeks ; their quick insight

Into all things that to noble actions led ;
The downfall, by savage hosts of Ætolians,
Of their oldest sanctuary of plastic art,
Dodona ; and, too, the fertile Samos,
Where rose the ancient temple of Juno,
Whose seed nourished the God-heads of Grecian
Art, devastated, laid waste by usurping
Pow'rs. I dwelt so long and so earnestly
On the sacred groves of Apollo, 'mid
Whose shades the Grecian gods were wrought,
that I
Was entranced, so wondrous was this age
Of art.

Then, changing events drew my attention
To the panorama of my life that remained
Indellibly fixed on the spacious
Heavens, travelling from one sphere to another
On the wings of light, yet ever present
Like a shadow in the sun. My acts of

Inhumanity seemed most prominent
And would repeatedly cross my range of vision,
However adjusted. To have these skeletons
Of fate always before me, plagued me some-
what,

But suddenly I was attracted by
A beautiful system of changing shades,
Which so engrossed my attention for a time,
I forgot these visions of sin, and marked
The beautiful emerald tints, like blades
Of grass, with orange blending, radiating
Into the most exquisite shades of gold.
The far distant suns shed reflections from
Their mirrors, on opaque bodies that hung
Poised in space, transposing them into gardens
Of Eden, that I longed to possess.

I drew a focus from a ray of light
That brought my scenic to the vale of Oil Creek.
It was summer, and the primitive growth

Of nature lay palpitating with life
And beauty o'er vale and hill. Where the
broad

River wound its silent way, by stars at night,
The sun by day, to the mouth or source,
The Indians canoeing, tracked their way.

I saw the Indians at their sports ; some
Anointing themselves with Seneca Oil,
Others lounging carelessly in the shade.
As quietly I sat watching these children
In their accustomed habits, and listening
To the dreamy murmur of a fountain
In the vale, breathing its soft notes of slumber,
I was startled to see the Indians
In hot pursuit of a fleeing stag.
My heart with ardor beat as he skirted
The green hills, far swifter than the eagle's
flight.
On they sped, the hell-hounds were after him !

Close on his trail the arrows were flying.

“Speed! speed for your life! You must speed,
for death

By the redskins is close at your side!” On,

On now he flew; past fleet-running foxes,

Past wildcats and hares, past mountains and
gorges;

Past swift-running streams whose waters he’d
quaffed;

Now sighting the hills near the broad flowing
River; missing the arrows that came

From the quiver, he onward did speed.

His sinews were strained to the sight of his eye.

The waters that lay at the foot of the mountain,
To reach was his hope for his life.

Fleet he is speeding with flag in the air,

Ev’ry nerve strained to its utmost tension.

Close and closer he’s nearing his hoped-for
goal!

Yet close and closer the hounds are on him.

See! he is trembling, he staggers, he reels!
Almost a life his efforts have cost.
Now on the verge of safety, can it be
That it's lost? Look! the hounds are tearing
Him down! The red blood of life gushes
Forth from his wounds. One more effort he
makes,

Goring the dogs as they rush for his life.
Crimson with their blood his antlers are dyed,
Coloring the waters as he plunges
'Neath the dark-flowing tide. "Hurrah! Hur-
rah!"

I cried, as he swam bravely o'er and 'scaped
'Neath the thicket on the far-distant shore.

As I gazed around 'mid the sloping hills,
On pine-fringed streams with nodding crests
dipping
Low and gracefully to the resinous air,
Where clustering vines and fragrant laurels

Were blooming fresh in nature's wilds ; where
wild rose

And gay honeysuckle were twining close,
And intermingling their sweets on passing
breeze ;

In religious worship saw I the children
Of the forest. After the chief had rehearsed
In love and war their conquests of the past,
Till the sun westward drove across the sloping
Hills to its rest, until night with her sable
Wings kissed up the day in soft sleep, unveiling
Her stars, and chasing her glor'ous canopy
Of light behind the deep'ning shades of gloom,
Sat the devout children of the forest
Amid their worship. As they passed the calu-
met

Of peace among their braves, Seneca Oil,
As if by magic, arose to the surface
Of the stream. The moon sank behind the hill ;
Darkness lay like a pall over the face

Of earth. As the torch-bearer with steady
Hand, unfaltering step, moved forward and
dipped

His light amid the oleaginous fluid,
The great fire in a golden, lambent glow
Of flame shot above their bending forms,
While they chanted forth in unison : —

“ Oh, Great Spirit !

Mighty art Thou ! Thy power doth far surpass
The wild waste with all its rocks and streams,
With all its hills and vales. We love Thee,
As we love the shade of the wood at noonday
heat.

We love Thee as the dew the flowers ;
As the earth the sun ; as the hunter the chase.
Guide us to hunting-grounds where birds and
beasts
Are feasting in the shades ; where streams are
filled

With otter, mink, fish and fowl. Make us
keen

Of sight, quick of ear,
So detecting all trails that lead to danger.
Like as autumnal leaves are swept by whirlwinds
Sweep away the pale-faces from our shores.
Drive them across the great waters that they
May not come in the dark night, with soundless
Steps like snowflakes' fall, and murder our sleep.
Drive them from us that we may not in fear
Rest on our tomahawk and bow. Drive them
From us that a cloud may lift from the face
Of our race ; that the sighing of our hearts
Will be no more ; that the wrath in our eyes
May soft'n ; that our voices, like hollow winds,
May not be mournful. Drive them from us
That our squaws' hearts may not be sad ; that
they
May not raise the wail of grief for our braves
Slain in battle. Like a cloud before the wind

They have driven us towards the setting
Sun, seeking our lives like Kichemanatou,
The god of evil ; slain our braves whose spirits
Now are shaking the shaggy locks of the wood,
And whispering to us on the passing breeze
Of ' Revenge ! ' No more shall we hear their
whoop

In the chase ; no more their bows twang in our
Defence ; no more the scalp of the foe
Shall hang from their belts. The pale-faces have
sent

Them to their long home. The Evil spirit
Is in the pale-faces ! Drive them from us,
That we may build our wigwams, raise our
corn,

Hunt and live many moons from now in peace.
At last guide us safe through the dark river
Of death to the forests of our lost braves."

As those savage children looked upon

The towering wall of fire, they worshipped
It as a deity. Again and again
Their shouts of praise went forth to the Great
Spirit.

Again and again the echo from the hills
Fell back upon the ear, till morn broke forth,
Kissing up the dew from off their brows,
And closing this simple but devout worship
Of their Deity.

I marked the development of Petroleum,
Tracing it from the heathen fire-worshippers
To the blanket gathering Oil merchant
Selling it as a sov'reign cure for aches and
pains ;

On through decades of years, till the clumsy
Haymaker was set in diamonds
From its still further development
And commercial value.

I saw thousands of people, like a hurricane,

Sweep the land, rush on to the Oil region,
Secure leases, drill wells; until Oil Creek vale
Was a very fount of Oil, flowing
To waste unceasingly. Short of barrels,
Short of tanks, no pipe-lines then, as since,
To checker the land like a spider's netting,
And convey the crude Oil safe to market;
But four thousand teams, and hundreds of flat-
boats
In daily rounds could not transport the crude
Oil
To railroads distant, fast enough to relieve
The glutted tanks that sat buried in the wealth
Of their overflowing contents.

As I gazed on this scene, Nature seemed hurt,
And in her sobbing pulsations sent forth
A stream of Oily tears that came welling
Up from her lacerated heart, as if weeping
For the wrong-doing of man.

The confined gas
From the way-down bowelly depths of earth,
In its spontan'ous rising to earth's surface
Flayed the rich green Oil into yellow foam,
That floated like flakes of gold on the em'rald
Oily surface of the tanks, then like heat went
 escaping
From the pipe in rings, floating far and wide
In the generous air.

I saw hundreds of towns in the Oil region
Rise like magic, and vanish like mist
Before a summer's day.
I could trace in different periods
Of my life, the husbandman tilling
His beautiful green and golden-ripe
Harvest lands. I could note the mellow dawn
Shed its soft lustre o'er Pennsylvania's hills,
And the autumnal tints in a thousand
Colors, beautiful, changing.

Methought I could hear
The silvery tones of trickling stream
As it wound its way through Oil Creek vale,
Past yielding wells, on, on past Oil farms rich,
To the river Alleghany it took
Its course. I could see flowing wells throwing
Their golden spray into the derricks high
That glisten'd in the sun's beams like rainbow
hues,
Diamond-sprinkled, or like Heav'n's jewels
Goodly set in varied shades sparkling in the
sky.

I took note of the pompous, wise Professor,
Who in the sorcery of his wits,
Where the hills meet the vales, went groping
'long
The ground with a forked witch-hazel twig,
Locating an Oil well for some innocent,
Unsuspecting, gullible fellow.

Too, the Oil-smeller, with his nose to the earth
Went snuffing the secrets from the womb 'of
Nature —

The spiritualistic mediums
Gathered information from departed souls
And located Oil-wells according
To their direction, which, notwithstanding,
From a higher pow'r were not always produc-
tive.

From the punctured soil gushed a min'ral Oil
That lit the spots of earth yet unhallowed
By the sun. Along our streets, and at our
Hearth-stones Nature's gas shed a welcome ray.

Her golden glow of wealth in my full purse
Like di'monds shone. Far out upon the sea
The Oily fluid glowed, a ruby beacon
To the mariner. Like a divine thought
It has shed its glamour o'er all the world.

I noted all the changes, different,
In the "Oil Fever," from the first coming
In of the Drake-well to my crowning effort
In Oil producing. I watched with pleasure
My dazzling triumph, "The S. I. Co.,"
Bud and blossom into the "S. O. Co.,"
Which rolled on in its greedy flood until
It swept the world, developing a maw
Insatiable.

I saw the world in its development
From beginning through ages of mis'ry
And lustre. I saw the earth when its cascades,
Cataracts, nodding woodlands, hills and vales
Were by water submerged, again and again.
Then I walked with the husbandman while turn-
ing
The sod, and tasted sweet the breathing odors
Of newly opened furrows. I marked
America's patriarchs cluster like stars

To beat back English despots, that with hand
Mighty were trying to hold them under
The monarchial yoke. I saw Liberty
Take shape amid the primitive forests
Of America ; woodmen felling the trees,
The log cabin spring up ; fields of waving grain
Shoot forth ; heard the song of the reaper,
The tingling of the herd-bell, until all
Nature teemed with life and liberty
Amid this grand Republic.

But in the midst of my meditations,
St. Peter interposed and bade me follow.
Down, down we flew, our wings dipping sweetly
The rainbow hue of the star-spangled Heavens ;
On we flew, through gleaming fields of asteroids,
Disturbing not the spirit of night,
Nor yet the drowsy ferry-man on his
Nocturnal rounds, whose great business

I'd destroyed, but who yet goes mournfully,
Silently on his way. Still on we flew.

After travelling several
Billions of miles, we directed our course
By a flick'ring ray of light shooting forth
From a bright star of the twelfth magnitude,
Whose waning glow from starting-point to earth
Is four thousand years *en route*, trav'ling two
hundred
And thirty thousand miles in a second,
A distance of twenty-three thousand billions
Of miles.

Down, down we winged, on past Neptune,
On past Uranus floating sol'tary
In the gloomy distance of giddy space,
On, on past myriads of solar systems,
From whose shades of gold and green, blue and
red,

Shone forth in a unison of soft colors of
The most ravishing shades of beauty to greet us.
Oh ! with what an unimaginable charm,
Clothed in gorgeous splendor, hung the glitt-
 'ring
Lights in space. We passed ruby moons, glim-
 'ring
Stars of emerald hue ; large opal suns,
All shining with iridescent glory !
This heavenly jewelry soft'ning into
Varied shades, beautiful, illumined my track
Through space.

We swiftly rushed past mighty orbs,
Whose "marble beams" in lustre, heat, and
 light,
Out-vied the sun. Then, slowly on with slack'n'd
Speed and resting mien we moved through hazy
 blue
Of dreamy ether in an ecstasy

Of delight. Again on, my soul's propelling
pow'r

Forced me, winged with flight to outstrip the
fleetest

Ray of light. Down, down we flew, deviating
Our course to shun Saturn in the seventh
Heavens, under whose malevolent rays
The Producers and Independent Refiners were
born,

Filling them full of foulest contagions,
Paralysis, gout, abscesses, obstructions
Of the heart and liver ; breeding discord
And contention in their souls. As for a base
Purpose, some power from the bowelled deep.
Hath fixed thee in the Heav'ns, thou detested
Plague spot.

On, on, swiftly on we flew, past
The polluting air of that most loathsome
Planet, Saturn, till we neared the smiling,

Refulgent rays of Jupiter, shining
Forth to meet us. We held our course direct
Across her bright, broad expanse of surface,
Anon dipping low to rest on mountain
Peak our flight.

Methought I then gazed around
In a bewilderment of pure delight ;
For all things were beautifully strange to me.
The fruit, the flowers, the grain, and the soil,
All animated and vegetable life
Were of a most ravishing symmetry.

The ant'lopes nimbly bounded from jewelled
Rock to rock, plucking sweet herbage, to me
Of unknown growth, which fed their lives and
love
Alike. They so fondly caressed each other,
I bethought me, if the children of earth
Could have seen that spirit of devoted love

In the brute creation of Jupiter,
They would have slunk for shame, it so far
surpassed

All human love that e'er was seen on earth.
Ev'ry branch, ev'ry quiver in each leaf
Was sacred to love ; through ev'ry bower
And palace in the land was heard the voice
Of love. From the songs of Nature that came
In snatches on the fragrant breeze, was love !
There was nothing in Nature that was void,
For through all things sweet love seemed mur-
muring.

I saw great trees with massive roots clinging
To crevice side and around diamond rock,
Whose glaring space was cover'd part with lucid
Green and golden shades of moss, while other
part

In gorgeous color was exposed to view.
From each pore the trees sent forth such frag-
rance,

It gave to the air a soft,
Dreamy delight.

As we wandered o'er this broad jewelled ex-
panse,
With transports we gazed in the valley below,
On Jupiter's most ravishing beauties.
We noted the vessels on the broad green,
Glimm'ring sea, going to and from their marts,
Swept ever on by the mighty wind, swift
As in the blue void winged — no ships of
earth,
Puritan or Mayflower, so fleet as they.

Low in the vale anon our way we took,
Passing stupendous vine-clad palaces ;
Over sweet murmuring rills and winding meads ;
On, past blooming banks of velvet flowers ;
Winding on, through, and past vast sylvan
shades,

To the haunts of wood-nymphs we held our
way.

At our approach the nymphs lipped sweet their
songs,

Filling our souls with all the harmony
Of Heaven's melodies.

How soft the perfumed breezes blew !
As to the wood we gently drew :
Voices murmuring in the bow'rs,
Nymphs were gath'ring bright-hued flowers,
Some were reclining on the ground,
Others dancing to music's sound.
Ev'ry turn they new graces showed,
As from the lute soft music flowed.

Flushed by the giddy, whirling maze,
On ruby cheeks 'twas sweet to gaze ;
While down their necks that 'lectric glowed,
Begemmed, their silken tresses flowed.

Scarfs of gems of the brightest hue
Swung, as they whirled the ether blue.

From their ears hung pearls that softly glowed,
While from their necks fair rubies showed.
On their fingers the rarest stone
In countless rays like meteors shone.
Here love poured forth its sweetest show'r
To living grace in ev'ry bow'r.
All Nature nestled as a dove,
All perfect planned by hand of Love.
We lingered long until the dusky eve
Broke in, then decked in flowers appeared their
Queen, the most exquisite beauty e'er was seen.
In a sweet dignity of royal birth
The divine working of her charms shone forth.
For her people she was pregnant with love ;
Their faith in her was deep as mighty space
'bove.
In ev'ry movement a noble self-repose,

A Queen of queens her ev'ry grace but shows ;
Such par'mount grandeur on earth ne'er was
seen ;
There ne'er was compeer to this woodland
queen.

As along over Jupiter's bosom
Of unparalleled soil, the dappled sun
Serene arose, kissing sweetly the melting
Dew from refreshed Nature, I stood amazed,
In transports at Jupiter's unfoldments.
Broad fields of rip'ning grain lay before me ;
Herds of cattle ; great cities cut and reared
From diamond quarries loomed up so bright,
The changing hues dazzled my spirit sight.

As we onward took our course, people trooped
After us, decked in garlands of rarest
Flowers (some to me very like the tube-rose
And orange blossom), went strewing them 'long

Our path. 'Mong those children of innocence

God reigned in the heart supreme. Transgression,

None there ; no sin, all a un'ty of love
And saint-like pur'ty. All things so beautiful
To the spirit-eye so perfect all work,
One might have mistaken it for the abode
Of angels !

The animals found so easy
Their support, in pleasure and harmony
Dwelt as one family. The spotted leopard,
Lion and mottled fawn (as I would call them),
Mingled and sported in the same forest.
Plumy birds of passage, fearless of man,
Winged their swift course unmolested, over
Running streams, and through fields of rip'ning
grain,
From zone to zone.

Birds of song ever warbled their sweet lays
In the never-changing spring ; singing praise
To new glories that awaited upon
The dawning of each morn, or sang to sleep
The dewy eve to its ambrosial shades.
There the verdant banks of flowers ever
Bloomed unasked ; new buds putting forth, ere
old
Beauties died away.

With unalloyed pleasure,
I watched the twilight deepen into sable
Gloom, over forest and o'er mountain-tips
'Till sleep, that " balm of life," rested on Jupi-
ter's
Fair domains. Amid this quiet profound
The teeming soil sent forth a mellow warmth
Of budding beauty, so closely linking
Animate and inanimate nature
That Jupiter seemed the one sacred spot

Blest by God. The spontaneous growth of life's
Nourishment gave food and drink like a nurse ;
Flesh and blood were fed and watered from her
Prolific harvests without an effort.

There were such existing relations between
Jupiter and her children, one could pluck
A jewel from the sod and in its crystal
Depths, see reflected the pur'ty of her life.

Jupiter seemed to say to her nurslings,
" I know you all, you are my children, flesh
And bone of my getting ! You are of me,
A part and parcel of my great whole.
I love you all, yet I'm proud of my hills,
Forests, slopes and vales ; they all obey my
laws,

Pulsate and throb to the beating of my
Desires. The mallow-grass that's filled
With little insects, the flowers, sipped by
Murmuring bees, are of me. My nature

Thrills with the dawning of new life. I enthuse
All with love, as if the rock, tree, turf
And animate nature was the common
Father, mother of all life embodied
In one creature."

The people of Jupiter in religious
Liberties, domestic relations,
The magical splendor of their art,
Internal and external developments
Are crowned with such a halo of glory
As no other world can hope to achieve.

We winged on, over
The blooming sod of Jupiter, whose fragrance
Led sweet our trail. ('Tis said, Jupiter's soft
beams
Shed lustre o'er the birth of all
Great men), and whose refulgent rays gave
forth

Unus'al brightness when I first drew breath
Of mortal life.

It was said, there were great
Freaks in Nature, before unknown to man
At my birth. New suns appeared in the
Heav'ns
To illume this greatest of all occasions !

New stars of the first magnitude shone forth
In the blue depths serene of boundless space ;
While all of the planets in the radius
Of billions of miles, shone unparalleled
Forth, on this, the most peerless occasion.
But the earth, ne'er before was in such rage.
Nature, in her ever mysterious
Workings, held strange freaks. Black clouds,
demon-like
Frowned o'er the face of Heaven, while the
earth,

Like a stagg'ring drunkard, reeled to and fro,
Shaking its poles to the very centre.

Through all the wildness of her nature
Earth opened up the channels of her flood
And vom'ted forth from her unsated womb
Huge slimy monsters of the deep. She shook
Her avalanches, whose projecting peaks
Hung like a lowering pestilence
Over doomed cities ; sending grim terror
To heart of man.

It was predicted at my birth,
Of me, after a certain number of years
I " should fill the world with dread and woe !
Bring all living creatures down to my feet ;
Cause mis'ry and suff'ring to man before
Unknown ; making earth quake, shiv'ring man's
soul with fear.
While at my passing out earth would explode,

And shoot forth into space, a worthless wreck ! ”
Thus far all's proved true 'twas prophesied
Of me, and why not all the rest ?

On we flew, past Mars in its blood glimm'ring
light,
Shedding forth its horrors hast'ning our flight
To the sun's burning rays ; there we lent
Extra speed to our pinions, and swifter
Than thought we flew through burning rays.
Then we
Onward winged till we reached our sister
worlds, Venus
And Murcury.

Still on we winged, till we scaled the giddy
Heights aloft and seated ourselves on the horn
Of the crescent moon, there to bethink us
And take a prospectus of my gloomy world
below.

With St. Peter when first setting out,
I, as if perforce he took me, reluctantly
Followed. At the prodigious aerial flight
I was somewhat affrighted. Towards the disk
Of the silver moon soaring up, o'er white
Pillowed clouds, on through the blue sky front-
ing

The stars, leaving behind earth's shades, we
winged.

In the distance vast lay my torments, for
To fall was death ! if lost, become a wanderer
In space.

Still we onward wafted,
I the while keeping sight of my sun that
Seemed to shine with unusual lustre
Until to a star dim and faint, waning,
Sunk into the distance, hiding from me
Its identity in the midst of the
Milky way. It seemed as if a cloud,

Creamy white, had veiled her surface, yet 'mid
Its translucent folds shone soft opalescent
Hues, fixing my ken as if tranced by its
Beauteous maze. So far from home being,
I at first mourned the awful calamity,
And inward perplexed lay with thoughts of evil
Nature framed, being fearful I could not
Return to my possessions. I was about
To lose heart, when straight from the mental
strain

I was relieved by being endowed with
Angelic range of vision that brought to light
My world and its attending spheres as if close
At hand.

Again being myself, with pleasure I viewed
The charming scenes that were dotted over
This vast field of space. The changing systems
Of gold'n gales from pellucid depths of color
Reminded me of one grand flower garden.

All the hues and shades of plants and flowers
Were pictured in this array of Heav'n's jewels.
The binary suns, white and purple,
Yellow and blue, gold and red, changing
Periodically, variable, from
A maximum to a minimum of
Intensity, ravished my senses
With their most wonderful beauty.

As I looked o'er

Our nebula (I might say mine) of thirty
Millions of worlds I bethought me, "What an
Improvement I shall make in the condition
Of affairs in this unorganized
System of worlds when I assume control!
'Twill become apparent how I shall develop
Matters farther on. Here is the hand that
Will hold the sceptre of power and at
Pleasure wield it. 'Tis but a mission
Providence has assigned me; for what it's
Worth I'll use it. I'll eat into the commerce

Of creation, as into the vitals
Of man, consumption. As death fattens on
 life
I'll grow rank on life's substance. The infinite
Riches that lie before me I can but
Admire, in wonder silent.
I'll discover in boundless space, new spheres
With Oil laden, with immeasurable
Stratas of lead, zinc, copper, hills of
Solid iron, rushing streams whose sands are
Intermingled with gold and precious stones.
Ocean like deserts of exhaustless fertil'ty,
These multiform products will all enhance
My stores of wealth. I will still on, opening up
A multiplicity of worlds in distance
So vast the flight of soul scarce can reach, so
 vast
Fancy cannot picture, nor figures compute
This immensity of space, nor my
Accruing wealth.

“ With deep int’reast and vision telescopic
I view these nebula fields before me ;
The arbitrary shades disappear and void
Opens its world of wonders, wherein
The mighty machinery of the Heav’ns
Is only excelled by the vast viewless
Void. All this wonder amid my little world
Loses prestige and sinks in insignificance.
I will for the present (continued I, still
Self communing), establish a centre
In each nebula making my head-quarters
In my beloved star Jupiter ; this, of all
My different organized systems to be
The centre. But soft ! a difficulty
Stupenduous will soon arise, from Jupiter’s
Not having a capacity to contain
The wealth accumulating by my projected
Scheme ; this will necessitate my building
A world with dimensions prodigious. I will
Take spheres, a multiplicity, and resolve

Them into one great orb, scooped and hollowed
Like an urn, to increase its capacity ;
With vaults and cells for holding lucre ;
All fire-proof, roofed with gold and set with
precious

Stones. Yes! I will make such a world. I
will

Plant this world in the centre of operations
Making it the recipient and observatory
Of my entire domain.

I will be in communication
With each and ev'ry world in all the diff'rent
Nebulæ so as to note the earnings
Of each individual sphere, and mark
The reports to, and returns from the centre
Of operations of each nebula.

There is nothing in this arrangement but
What is practical, and I shall put it
Into operation at once. My expenses
Will be slight, as I shall arrange for spirits

To do the work, who, like chameleons,
Shall feed upon air. "Let me see, how shall
I manage this?" mused I; "the spirits now
In Heaven, I may not control, but all
Of those in Hell I think I can manage,
And there is by far the largest percentage
Below. This is what I will do, I'll bail
Them out! It can be done if I have to bribe
The devil, and have their services
For his consideration. I'll make him
My foreman, to keep them in fear; if they
Become incorrigible he can subdue
Them. There are some fearfully bad characters
From the Oil regions that are now languishing
In Hell, which, to keep in subjection,
Will need the combined forces, and constant
Vigilance of the Penal Powers, yet I
Must needs have them, for most of them have
had
A large experience in the Oil business,

And can take right hold and do the drilling for,
And refining of Oil. I am going
To test the territory for Oil
On all of my possessions ; if anticipated
Results follow I'll make the Oil business
A prominent feature of my new domains.
Yet there are some difficulties in the way ;
Those very souls that I needs must have
My work to execute I would fain leave
In the Pool. Ah, well ! I'll through the week
work
Them, then deep in Hell drive them forth to
languish,
And abide their time Sundays. Holidays
I'll sink them lower in the depths of woe to
chafe
And smite the air into eddying dusky
Whirlwinds, that, moaning will mock their cries
And lamentations sore, until, grief-tried
And horror-stricken, they will plead for mercy ;

Thus subdued from Hell come forth, penitent
And obedient to work my will.

“ When bringing souls from the depths of grief
And torments, with vicious designs, somewhat
Subdued, I'll have them to understand
By my suggestion and desire they were
Released. This will make them revere me
As a god, and thus I shall command more
Work from them. Yet some few despoiled
wretches
From the Oil regions, the Producers and Inde-
pendent
Refiners, who somewhat tried my patience
When they were on earth, by interfering
With my schemes, and bowed reluctantly
To my will, I'd still make acknowledge
My superiority and again feel
My pow'r. I'll have them feed upon Hell's
diet,

Brimstone, for all time, thus driving the corruption

From their blood in carbuncle-sores. I'll have
Adders about them coiled with their 'venom'd
stuck,'

In torture dire lancing their fest'rings, putrid.

While the pestilent sores are from their blood

Forth-coming and they in grief lamenting,

In mocking exposure I'll have them before

My very eyes exhibited ; then chuckling

I'll feed upon their misery until

They pleading beg for relief, which for certain

Considerations in obedience

I'll grant them. This will be a humiliation

Sore to their haughty souls and a triumph
grand

For me. I fear those souls that while on earth

Murder committed, will of no service

Be to me ; deep in the lower stratas

Of Hell they will be so scourged with torture,

That sore lamenting their time they can but
spend.

'Tis well, I'd shrink from this 'godless crew.'
Some few souls there are, when they were on
earth

I had some slight regard for, now languishing
In the Pool, abjured their heav'nly bliss
By monopolizing certain commodities
To the detriment and discomfort
Of others ; to them, be it said, I acted
With some consideration ; I'll give them
My lightest employment, have them clean
' Stills.'

" Feasible are all my plans, and when
I get matters systematized as I did
The S. O. Company on earth, I will
Then connect the different nebulae
And planetary systems to my central
Focus, with a ray of light both for sight

And sound, no matter how far distant.
With this telephone of sight and sound, I can
Note the every day occurrences
Of transpiring events. Had I been
Possessed with ambition, I might
Have developed this thought, and had my scheme
In operation previous to this.
I have no fear but that I can crush all
Opposition that may present itself,
And thus amass the wealth of the entire
Creation. I will not drown more worlds, but
In a commercial way, absorb the wealth
Of each planet, until the people groaning
Under the weight of poverty and oppression,
Dying, will let slip their souls. While escaping,
I will enlist these airy immortals
Into my service to work as I may
Dictate, feed them upon air-diet,
And occasionally give them a little
Recreation in Hell.

“ I will place a series of worlds
In convenient groups to use as plants
For vast Oil distilleries, and all the globes
Containing Oil, at a close proximity,
So, with a slight outlay of material
I can pipe the Oil to my refining
Int'rest. Having all under one supervision
I can manufacture with much less expense.
I will place my exporting and shipping
Facilities under one organized head,
Having millions of worlds in use for wharfage,
And export shipping traffic.
This will bring my several interests
Together, under one management. Having
Complete control of the Oil business, I'll charge
The people as much per gallon as my fancy
Dictates, which will be no trivial sum.
I will introduce a new system
Of currency (having my own profile
On the face of each coin), to be used

Universally throughout all creation.
I'll establish mints and do all the coining
Myself; this to be done under an organized
System of worlds similar to my Oil int'rests.
For this work I shall need to secure spirits
Known for honesty and integrity,
Which will be difficult, they'd be so liable
To spirit away the precious metals.
For this work I must needs secure some
Of the old Puritan stock if I have
To search Heaven for such help. I will
Also allow but one language spoken,
The English, in order to do away
With interpreters and a complication
Of difficulties that would arise
From a mixture of tongue.

" Worlds that are prolific
With tin and other valuable metals,
I will place at a convenient distance

From my refining interests, having
The tin metal for the manufacture
Of cans to be used in exporting Oil
From sphere to sphere; this will be done by
great

Air vessels flying through space fleet as thought,
Manned by skilled spirits. I will allow
No electric lights, or electricity
Used, save in death, and that I will adopt
As a mode of execution. I'll permit
No gas used, or light save Oil, and that all
Must come through me. If the Oil gives out,
I might put in the Edison light, but
I'll give no royalty on the invention.
The desire for gold hath so goaded me on,
That I as yet have made but a start
And my projected scheme doth only approximate
An approach to my desire. I would
Make a proviso touching upon my

Refining plants. If I can the heat of Hell
Control (no doubt but I can), my distilling
Of Oil will therein be done ; this will o'ercome
A series of difficulties that needs
Must otherwise be perplexing ; bribing
The Devil and taking souls out of their
Natural sphere ; while not least but last,
The enormous saving of fuel,
Which alone would bring to my purse countless
Millions. This is a generous thought,
And further into the heat of Hell I'll look.
Such results can I bring 'bout as controlling
The ne'er consuming Penal fires, I'll astonish
Creation ! Piping to save in conveyance
Of crude Oil from sphere to sphere ; the worlds
Teeming with Oil I will wheel convenient
To the Pool, tap them, suck the Oil from their
Bowels, tow them back to do their natural
Work. I must soon manage to give the Devil
An audience with me to see what

Arrangement satisfactory I can
Make for his heat.

“’Tis true, while floating near the gates of
flame

The people these worlds occupying
Will need salamanders to be, to withstand
The overpressure of heat. But what odds
To me if they should wither under the blight
Of Hell? ’Twill, figuratively speaking,
Only be a day sooner for them ; all
Things considered, it may be for the best,
Save many from a degradation deeper
Who would have committed murder, then
sunk

Lower down within the pool ; by this mode
The average will be better, thus the plane
Of punishment higher and less. Like as
To a nest of worms suspend’d from a tree-
bough

Burning, the people while anchored at Hell's
gate

On worlds laden with Oil will squirm. En-
joyed

I should have, had I in operation

This scheme when in life and bloom was my
little

World! A bath in Hell I'd given it,

And contents. To the verge of attraction

I should have towed it, then like as a fated

Soul in Niagara's suction whirls on, on

Ever faster until beneath the torrent

Mighty is entombed, thus the Penal fires

Mid all her torments would have drawn the
world

And contents in its vortex, there consumed it.

By the substance of their bodies, the souls

Being scorched would like withering leaves,
cringe

Float and flutter in the blighting heat.

“ But stay,

I would not the Oil sacrifice ! The souls
Would be of no consideration.
For diversion and on great occasions
Such as my birthday, those worlds whereon
The people have become poor and caused me
Some annoyance, and I have extracted
All the valuables I'll have carted to
And consumed in Hell.

“ I have spirit-pow'rs

Suggested for moving worlds, if they'll not serve
My purpose I have still another
Expedient which is as follows, as to the result,
No question. For illustration, my little
World, should I desire, along beside Jupiter
Placed, a vast cable I should from earth
To Jupiter stretch, to each planet fasten
The ends ; the rotation of Jupiter, being
The heavier body, by the winding

Of the rope draw Earth perforce to any
Point desired ; the two existing planets .
Between. By this system to any place in space
I can tow planets. From rays of light I'll
Weave the ropes drawn from spheres far distant,
yet
In direct lines of those to be moved.
To put a perfect finish to this work
I'll have temper'd the rays of light with Petro-
leum
Heat, insuring strength and durability.

"I'd have no gas used, erewhile I said ; this
will
Be true in one sense, no manufactured gas
I will have used but all natural gas,
For economy and profit I'll introduce
And use in Oil distillation, providing
No terms with the Devil satisfactory
Can be made for heat. No doubt some of my

Old worlds, that for ev'ry other purpose
Are useless, hold concealed in their bowels
Trillions upon trillions of feet cubit
Of natural gas. If this be so, I can
It utilize to as equal good advantage
As Oil, and at less expense. Out of a group-
ing
Of worlds choice, those that are the most densely
Populated, rich in domestic comforts
And conveniences of life, I'll select,
As another blessing, pipe my gas to them
For fuel. I'll a system organize
For convenience and profit, to that
Similar I had on earth ; however, instead
Of so much per-month charging, by the foot
I'll sell. I'll wheel these worlds north or out
Of the direct rays of their suns ; push them
To the cold latitudes ; increase consumption
Of gas by an extra pressure of frigid
Temperature, the while my profit increasing.

“A practical man
Might deem it impossible to connect
Worlds that are constantly in rotary
Movement with pipe, but I think that affairs
I have arranged so as with rotation
Not to interfere, or with most freaks
That nature may see fit to indulge in.
The scheme I’ve projected is to connect them
With swing and swivel joints, this will of rotation
And parallel movement admit, which is
Sufficient. If this system does not work,
Arrange, I will, the orbs to suit my
Convenience ; thus all complicated
Difficulties bridging.

“Save in executions, I’ve intimated,
I’d have no electricity used, but
Reflection careful confirms the necessity
In each world of establishing a telegraphic
System, both for my profit and the people’s

Convenience. In civilization the worlds
That are young and backward, I'll forward
Bring with the rapidity of thought, at once
I'll establish the great civilizer
Of creation, a system of Education ;
Make the people prosperous, happy,
And thus early have them contributing
To me from a rich, productive virgin soil.
Also, I must introduce to facilitate
Trade (my profit always considered), a system
Of well regulated railroads. I'll have
No commerce commissioners to balk
My arrangements but have all conducted
As a government affair under one
Organized head ; as all public necessities,
Such as railroads, telegraphs and telephones
Should be.

“ I'll arrange all traffic conveyances
So they will be as easy of access

To one as another and with the same
Efforts, like results will follow. This
Equality will encourage an active
Spirit in trade, thus good effects will ensue.
I'll have no monopolies but what I
Establish. Centralizing money to
Throttle commerce is dangerous to my
Interest and the general welfare
Of the common herd. As much as practical,
I must do away with money power,
(Save in myself) ; it breeds extremes, poverty
And affluence ; extremes breed trouble.
I must try if possible, to keep the people
On the same level, so mingling will assist
Each other. Of course, eventually
My steady drain will absorb their wealth,
But they will go down on the same plane,
Embraced by unsympathizing poverty
And sympathizing friends, attributing
The unavoidable results to fate.

“ As I am confident the proposed system
Will not work to an advantage on all
Of my spheres, I shall need to study, somewhat,
Into the dispositions of the numerous
Kinds of human life that my diff’rent worlds
Are peopled with, to determine the best mode
Of government to subject them to.
Varying soil and climate will produce
A multiplicity of temperaments,
Hence diff’rent systems in government will
Need be enforced. It is possible and quite
Probable, on some of my planets I shall
Be compelled to organize a militant
Form of government and force compulsory
Co-operation, bring combatants
And non-combatants together at the
Bayonet’s point. Through militant power
I can force people into a bulwark
Of defence against themselves, thus forming
A structure that will stoutly resist change.

As I develop this thought, it rather
Pleases me. I'll centralize government
Administrations through coercive movement
So that it will run like clockwork at my
Pleasure. I'll have an organization
Of spies to examine into and report
Upon the working of high officials
And the people's doings, all being subject
To my investigation and disposal.

“ Under my militant form of government
I'll force the people to yield to me their
Earnings, beyond that required to sustain
A miserable existence. All must be
Completely at my disposal, labor,
Property and person. I'll subject the people
To such a severe discipline so that I
Can transplant them to this or that locality
As I may direct without their having
A voice in the matter. All persons,

Under pain of death will be required
To render a true account of moneys
Earned, and how disposed of to me. No citizen
Can belong to himself or family,
But, like chattels, to the government ;
(Which is myself.) I'll allow no man
A privilege but that I grant ; all will
Be held responsible to my headship ;
Individuals, military,
Political and judicial. I'll engender
Into the militant pow'r such brutality
That to commit murder will be but pleasure.
I'll make crime habitual to them, so
Liberty and life will be easily
Disposed of. I'll force the people into
A blind obedience ; I'll allow them
To have no will of their own ; their will must
Be mine ; they must have a passive expectance,
And accept what comes to them through my en-
tailed

System, without a murmur. My power shall
be

Absolute ; I'll absorb property, liberty
And life at pleasure.

“ This militant system will only be
Enforced where it is absolutely necessary ;
On some of my worlds I'll be more lenient.
I'll arrange to give the people leases, with the
Consideration that half their product, all metal,
mineral

Wealth, and precious stones shall recur to me.
The worlds that have grown old in service
And lost their vitality, I will use
As places to banish souls, those that are slightly
Disobedient ; leave them in durance vile,
And dumb silence for a time to suck their gums
On the airless orbs for sustenance. This will
Bring them under subjection. The old worlds
That I cannot use, I will explode to clear

Space of stagnant matter ; the defunct orbs
Useless rolling, concealed within their bowels
Precious stones may be hid. All this debris
 dead
Is not lost, its latent forces are but
Hid. Out of this substance of seeming worth-
 less
Solids, I will effect new orbs, gather
What mineral wealth they contain, then have
Spirits wheel the debris down to the
Penal fires, to consume it. Out of the smoke
And mist arising from Hell's vapors, create
New worlds, the uniting elements
Producing chemical action will again
Bring forth gold and precious stones, then
 smould'ring
Down to an inorganic life will shoot forth
Rank growths of vegetation, that covering
The soil in windfalls and drifts, which decom-
 posing

Will produce Petroleum Oil. The internal
Eruptions from pent-up gases will shoot forth
In earthquakes, volcanoes, enclosing
In their boweled depths this accumulation
Of Oil ; holding it as in a reservoir
For future development.

“ I will set this planetary system
Under such an organized law of operation
As ne’er was known before ; for my convenience
Destroying worlds and building worlds that will
Eclipse anything ever before wheeled
In void. If I’d had the management
Erewhile, of these heav’nly orbs, the affairs
Of space would have been more systematically
Arranged ; as it is I will make a complete
Revolution in the solar system.
I should not have had any dead stock in worlds
On my hands, I should have had them all
Advantageously utilized, previous

To their dotage. The one I'm sitting on, as 'tis,
It's not worth the powder 'twill take to explode
It, though, possibly there may be a few
Gems concealed in its inner crevices.

“ ‘Can I manage this stupendous scheme?’
(I asked myself, thoughtfully). ‘Ah, yes!
yes!’

Confidently replied my heart. Just look,
I mused, at what I used to do on my
Little world; it was a small matter
Beside this, 'tis true, but it gave me practice,
And confidence in my ability.
To review somewhat. I held the Railroads
In the palm of my hand; they dare not issue
A rate I was opposed to, and made all
Rates that I demanded of them. I controlled
The Oil market and the turpentine trade;
Was prominent and successful in the
Western land grab; whatever I invested

In, proved successful. If there was any
Loss to be sustained, I made other shoulders
Bear it than mine. The Petroleum Oil
Market was the base and backbone of my
Operations ; I absorbed all who dealt
Therein. It amused me somewhat to see
The ' Buckwheats ' sell Oil-farms, or make a
strike

In Oil, securing a snug fortune
By accident, as it were, and attributing
It to some imaginary smartness
Of theirs, then go on the Oil market
With their wealth and a self-puffed-up opinion,
A di'mond gracing their shirt front, in lustre
Not more luminous than the ruby tints
Of their nose ; speculate, win a few dollars ;
Ever suspecting 'twas through some smart-
ness
Of theirs ! though one might ask, no one could
tell,

Wherein they were smart; they could not tell
themselves!

But the while wearing an air of importance,
Thinking the Oil market could not run without
Their assistance, that they needs must have their
Say in its manipulation, to keep
It alive.

“*I* was the power behind the throne! I’d
Allure them on, like water, wanton boys,
Venturing farther and farther in the stream,
Until swept away by the flood. I would
Load them up with large quantities of Oil,
Having the while some of my supernumeraries
Whisper around that ‘the market was on
The advance!’ to make them eager for the bait.
When they were well loaded with high-priced
Oil

Let the market drop back a few cents,
Keeping them paying storage as long as

I deemed it practical, then force the market
Down to a beggar's price, increasing
The charges on storage, until they were
Compelled to sell their Oil way below
The buying price ; thus storage and shrinkage
In price would swamp them, financially.
This was but one of my schemes ; I had various
Ways of tripping them, always successful
And where they least expected it. I found
It the most potent to cast my line
For the heavy dealers first, and bring them
Floundering ashore securely hooked.
Of course, during my angling for the large fish,
Some few small speculators won by taking
The reverse of the market from those I hooked ;
But what odds? the money they made was as if
Loaned. When I wanted it I set my nets
And entrapped them. 'Twas enjoyment to me
But it made them squirm, and if ever they
Struggled to the surface, again, like as flies

For sweets gather around a molasses cask,
For lucre, they would at it, and again
Be fleeced.

“As brains are
A simple compound of albumen, fat,
Water, and phosphate salts, there can be no
Reasonable excuse for a mistake,
But I've sometimes believed that through the
Oil regions
The Lord must have substituted alcohol
For water, such a reckless exhibition
Of thought was displayed by this so-called
'Wise faction of speculators.' It was
So easy for me to fleece them, it became
Monotonous and I had to devise
New schemes for my diversion in land
Speculations.

“The Independent Refiners were the most

Perplexing crew that e'er I encountered
During all my experience in business ;
Not so much for their executive ability
As from the various ways they had to annoy
Me. I tried to buy them up to keep them
Out of the trade, but I was only lending
Fuel to the flame, for I gave them
Exorbitant prices for their works and they
Would use, as I might say, my money
To fight me with ; build new refineries
With an increase of capacity to flood
The refined market with low-priced Oil.
Then I tried to agree upon a uniform
Price with them to sell Oil at, but this was
An utter impossibility, they were
Always slopping over in some way, couldn't
keep
To the agreement, so I left them disgusted.
These were the only points wherein I was
Weak ; however, I soon took another tack

Which proved more successful ; bought up Rail-
roads !

Used ev'ry means to throw obstructions in their
Way. I put what I called the freezing process
To them. I, on illuminating Oil
Increased the freight on all their shipments,
Having the Railroads give me a rebate
On same. I dropped prices where they sold on
Illuminating Oil below the cost
To manufacture. I had the Railroads
Hold back their shipments until their customers
(Where they sold at a profit) countermanded
Their orders. I had men paid to invent
Schemes to harass their movements ; I placed
All annoyances conceivable
In their way to thwart their success, until
They were at my mercy. It is most
Wonderful what an energetic man
Can do if he sets his whole heart and mind
To the issue !

“ One might wonder why I flooded the world,
As I left but a straggling lot of Oil men,
Like as a bird with wing broken, half famished,
Seeking here and there for a paltry living.
I confess 'twas a shame to take advantage
Of such weak creatures, but finding ev'ry one
Plotting for my ruin, I became somewhat
Desperate and deemed it best to exterminate
The whole race of man, though I must confess
I felt a few pangs of remorse when I
Saw the work of destruction go on.

“ 'Tis true I held regal sway,
Sat like a god above the underlings
On that mighty throne, Monopoly.
Commerce was my cradle
Of delight. I had affairs working under
Such a system, all I needed to do, was
To say to the Old World, ‘ contribute ! ’ and it
Contributed. My voice was heard in ev'ry

Quarter of the globe, saying, 'contribute !'
Twenty millions a year was my income,
Sucked from the blood of toil ; my ghost of
 oppression

Crept into the hovels of the poor
Sapping their sustenance and lives, producing
Misery broadcast as famine. I made
Men so poor that poverty was ashamed
Of them ! so poor it was a disgrace to live,
Yet they clung to life with the tenacity
Of a millionaire, struggling to save what
They had been all their days trying to get
Rid of, an impoverished life. I burnt the
 mark

Of oppression on the forehead of Liberty ;
I trampled it under the foot of Monopoly.
I held a sway that made me practically
King. But, as affairs have terminated,
I regret not the world's destruction,
Everything works as I desire."

We encountered en route through space a shooting
ing

Star ; it moved with such terrific velocity
That we, being near, the suction drew us in
Its wake, holding us as a vise for millions
Of miles. We marked terrible events
From this wheel of fire. It onward drove like
Lightning, passing world after world in the
Constellation of the Hunting Dogs,
Which were so much attracted to us, we drew
Everything from their surface, rivers, lakes,
Oceans, cities, living creatures, all were
Engulfed and consumed in our tail of fire !
I could hear the last wail of helpless creatures
As they were being swept up by the mighty
Rushing torrent of attraction.

Here water gas was produced with a wondrous
Effect ; water amid the intense heat
Consumed like Oil, burning in a blue transparent

Light, showing a perfect combustion,
Surpassing all attempts ever made
On earth. To my dismay I discovered
That the star was being forcibly
Attracted by a sun ; ever increasing
Its speed it drove directly to her centre,
Trembling, with a crash struck the slag that
shot
In space a flood of spangles, then through
ether
Came dropping back, begemming the heavens
With hailstones of gold ! Still on it flew
Through the umbra, parting the molten wave
On either side, forcing its way directly
Through her metallic bowels. The great force
Of opposition somewhat slackened
Our speed, and the star, groaning, rock'd to and
fro
In the molten inwards of the sun,
As if struggling for an existence ;

The while sweeping on till, with a sound
mighty,

It rushed from the sun's embrace, burned to a
half

Consumed orb. Away back through the open-
ing

The incoming lava-wave came surging

On our flank reaching out its tongue of flame

As if to entrap us, but we following

So close in the star's wake through the orifice,

Like as the Israelites crossing the Red Sea,

Before the incoming waves could close

The opening we escaped. So intense was

The heat floating o'er this bed of molten

Liquid, like as a cremating furnace

Was the air ; had I longer to stay entomb'd

My soul must have perished therein. This en-
counter

Somewhat dazed me and for a time I lost

My bearings. The star never stopped, onward

Flew, until it became so hot for us
By consumption of accumulating
Matter, though on the extreme verge of attraction,
That it was imperative to rid
Ourselves of this law, and we laid our plans
For a coming crisis.

Directly in our front
Was an orb, young in years, and green with
fields,
Summer was warbling forth a melodious
Existence ; flowers and golden fruits maturing
In fragrant bowers ; the awful majesty
Of life was peeping from plant and palace.
I held my breath waiting for an expected
Crash, for two mighty orbs to come together,
But my sight misled me somewhat ; missing
The expected collision, we came so close
That flound'ring for a time like as to a balloon

O'er trees and housetops, we sustained our-
selves
On a huge immovable rock.

On the star flew !
Sucking every thing from the surface
Of this globe, consuming as it went, until
Exploding, vanished. This great frame we
clung to,
Trembling, shot after for a distance,
But soon losing the force of attraction
Dropped behind in unknown ether. We, 'scap-
ing
From her surface, left her heaving and swaying
To do or die, like an abandoned ship
At sea. I bethought me what a feast
The flames would have had should the star have
flown
Past my little world, sucking in the Oil,
And the corses in its depths !

“I must manage soon to get my refining
Interest under way so as to
Utilize this Oil, save an enormous
Shrinkage that is constantly going on
From evaporation. The nice green Oil
That now floats light in gravity will soon
Reduce to forty or less, making an
Inferior grade of illuminating
Oil, thus necessitating the expense
And trouble of mixing it with new Oil
That will be developed from as yet unknown
Territory. To start with, I must needs
Build new refineries, but as soon as I
Can get the surface free from Oil on my world,
I will utilize the vast amount
Of still capacity and machinery
Used in Oil manufacturing, left by
The Independents and Myself. This will
Be a very great saving to me.

“ Of course these suggestions are merely
Speculative, as yet I cannot tell
Just what will be the best mode of operation,
But this will show itself in the course of time.
I speak of this world's more especially
Being mine as I already have possession
Of it ; but in reality the vast
Universe is as much mine. I will as soon
As I get thoroughly established,
Issue a proclamation, setting forth my position
As Ruler o'er creation, a King o'er kings,
So that my regal sway will be clearly
Defined. I'll lay down a form of government
For each sphere ; placing kings or dictators
As I shall deem best suited for the people,
All being subservient to my will.
I do not so much mind the machinery
I place to govern my worlds, but what 'twill
Accomplish. I value that most, popular
Or unpopular, which produces

The best results. I shall have spirits armed
And equipped on every planet
Sufficient to quell any outbreak or
Disturbance that may arise 'mong the people,
And if must needs be, sweep them from the
face

Of existence. I think I've the workings
Of the solar system thoroughly mapped out,
And know just what course to pursue to secure
The greatest revenue.

I'll have the diurnal rotary of each
Planet working under such a system,
So that day on each and every orb
Will come about at one and the same time.
I'll shorten the days to six hours by increase
Of velocity of each orb, then as evening
Rolls in I'll slacken the rotary speed,
Making the nights longer, but having
In the aggregate the same time consumed
As before. This will be done to increase

The demand and sale of Oil ; the workingman's
day

Will run into night, necessitating
All shops and factories to be lighted
By Petroleum. The Oil consumed by
Each person will be charged, and on the day
Of settlement deducted from their wages.
The people will attribute this change
In the planetary system to the freaks
Of nature, thus relieve me of any
Suspicion they might otherwise have,
Enhancing the while my profits to an
Alarming extent. I may, in remote
Sections, extinguish some of my suns, and heat
And light the worlds they shone upon by Oil
And gas. Of course, as yet I cannot tell
About this ; it will depend somewhat on
Future Oil developments. If my
Territory is prolific and bids fair
To be long-lived, I can advance this scheme ;

If not, I will need to economize
Somewhat by allowing my suns to do
• Their natural work." The workings of Heaven's
Machinery was quite entertaining
And somewhat instructive to me.

I saw Saturn
And her great frame whirl'd in space by spirit
pow'r,
Accomplishing its diurnal rot'ry
In ten hours. I had scanned the azure void
Of Heav'n, dreaming in her translucent mist,
Spent a delightful time on my belov'd
Star Jupiter ; urged St. Peter to stay
'Till I could bore for Oil ; but he'd demurred
Saying that we had been three nights away,
And my corse being exposed to the heat
" Smelt rank " to Jupiter ; and that I " must
hie
Thither, take up my old abode again,

Set the heart in motion, and, by so doing,
Stop decomposition." I had witnessed
In panoramic form, from different spheres,
The development of my little world
From molten chaos to the present time.
I wished to know somewhat of the constellation
Of the Great Bear, and we directed our
Way by the dazzling splendor of the Pole Star.
This lord of the night never varying from
Its course, but, sentinel like, ever at his
Post, led straight our way. I saw en route, new
 worlds
Loom up, stars shoot from their spheres, heav'ns
 succeed
To heavens ; vast celestial objects come
And go ; calorific powers transform
Vapors into worlds, still the Eye of the North,
In a fixed course, God-like, is ever true.

As I looked o'er these vast nebulæ fields,

A storm of thought through my mind swept.

“How

Like Jove, who defied and held the lightnings

At bay, I, in the palm of my hand creation

Hold! This is no phantom thought, no hallucination

Wrought from fever-heated brains. No! no!

Those

Fields of *nebulæ* through the mighty void

Dotted golden with blinking stars, peeping

Out from cloud and sky at me suspiciously,

Are mine! They know,” thought I, “from my transcendent

Skill, the controlling power belongs to me.

’Tis

So decreed. I’m to be Ruler! No power

Can wrest the sceptre from me. My advantage in life

Is above the opposing power of wisdom.

Providence hath so hedged me round, no force

Can change or effect a disturbance 'gainst
My will ; all must succumb to my bidding."

As we lingered on the crescent,
I bethought me, what a dreary prospect
Is this moon. 'Neath our feet the cold dumb
sod ;
Nothing above but a vast, viewless void ;
Nothing around but that time had destroyed.
Nothing was seen but had a dead dull glare
While a bleak dread silence was ev'rywhere.
There were no fanning zephyrs to cool
The fevered brow, no clouds floating silver-
tipped
Through fathomless space ; no lily-crest waves
'Mid the waterless seas, shaking their cor'nets
Of foam 'gainst jutting rocks. There was no
sky ;
No azure vault to rest the eye ; the ear
Detected no sound ; no murmur of voices

To cheer and comfort the weary soul.
No song from sweet linnet or babbling brook
E'er woke an echo ; unchang'ble silence
Held sovereignty. No life, and no death
On this airless orb.

Cities that had once been peopled,
Stood all tenantless in this drear profound,
Paved streets whereon great kings had trod, lay
brown

And echoless. Huge monuments of the dead
That for years never an eye had rested on,
Stood, spire-like, pointing to Heav'n for what
had been.

Pond'rous books of unknown tongue lay before
me.

In them were hid the secrets of the past.
But we raised not a book, disturbed not a leaf,
Left untouched the secrets of this sacred
History.

I spoke to St. Peter, but my voice
Fell lifeless on my ear. I then touched him
And pointed to the moon's refulgent beams,
Throwing a silv'ry glow of soft liquid light
To the limpid air of my world below,
As a sign that I would like to depart.
He signified assent, and with renewed speed
We both swift winged from this hearse of death.

As we neared
Our journey's end, I could see my vessel
Riding like a cork over deluged hills
On the soft rocking of the oily wave.

As we nearer drew,
My ghastly second self in the gleaming
Moonbeams seemed so like a fright, I was loth
To take it on again, and begged St. Peter
(Although my pinions were weak from service)
That I might return with him.

But he, denying, left me, half in fear,
Half in disgust, quiv'ring o'er my loathsome
corse.

I felt like winging in space without a guide,
Till I touched the safety valve of the heart
And the vig'rous pumping sent the warm blood
Coursing through my veins, setting life's ma-
chin'ry
In motion.

I (still dreaming) thought to see the Saint
Afar, outstretched my hand for him to take
Me again through the alabaster gates.
But it was then that the gates gently drew
And left but Heav'n's impress my mind to view.
While thus in Morpheus' languid arms I lay,
Smooth as a tiller's plowshare cleaves the soil
My staunch vessel's proud keel cut clear her way
On through this limpid, liquid Sea of Oil.
As the gold'n sea rose and sank in cadence

Gentle, all Heav'n's grandeur was refulgent
To my tranced sense. My soul drew me to
 realms
Of love while my mortal form withheld me
From above.

Thus for hours wafted my wings of thought on
 high,
Until below the pangs of hunger drew
My sense. Now as Nature produced no seed
Of life, my soul and body were in strife ;
My several parts did demand meat
And fruit of the soil, while the earth I'd flooded
For greed of gain, and with it all matter
That did life maintain.

While thus rent and pierced with pangs of hun-
 ger,
I saw, by Heaven's tapers, food which did
Resolve itself into airy-like vapors

Transmitting odors and sustenance sweet.
As my boat amid this life-saving air
Moved along, through ev'ry fibre of my being
It sent new life, new strength and new joy
As it went.

Then, methought, I most earnestly did pray, —
“ Oh Father Omnipotent ! who makest
Life supreme, strengthen, prolong, make real
My soul-fledged dream. Let thy glories that
o'er me
Have burst, environ me as sin does souls
Deep cursed.”
As thus I prayed, a voice methought I heard.
Looking up, lo ! forthcoming from his bright
Estate, an Emissary of Heaven
Stretching his broad pinions rainbow-like o'er
The canopy of earth ! Chafing the air
In whispering whirlwinds he straight approached
Apace.

I wore a feigned boldness, and questioned close
His right on this mundane sphere. Said I,
“ You surely can have no business here, for I’m
The only mortal alive on earth and need
You not, nor want no parley with you.
You have no lucre whereby I could profit ;
It must be through some misdirected
Route you’ve led awrong your steps.” As he
nothing
Said, I feigned more boldness and questioned his
right
Asking “ why he made so free as to alight
On my vessel ? ” told him that it “ was unsafe
To trifle so with my sacred privileges ;
That my authority as King of the world
And dignity as such must be respected ;
It must not be encroached upon wantonly ;
That I should be greeted as my position
Demanded, courteously, and with due respect.”
At this he to me closer approached, wearing

A smile of confidence that seemed to belittle
Me, and addressed me thus, —

“ I am

An Emissary of Heav’n, sent by the Great
And All-Wise Power to hold a conference
With you. I wish to draw a picture,
A fair and truthful picture, that you may
Look at, and see depicted your own
Littleness.

“ Of Heaven, thou something know ;
Thou know’st the requirements to retain
A seat therein ; know’st man may look on
Heav’n
Even if his soul is reeking in sin,
As ’twere, to see pleasures he might have gained
If against justice he had not profaned.

“ Thou knowest man should make the well-being

Of human souls the chief end of life.

Whene'er man has wrought for this great
aim

He approves himself in the sight of God,
And thus in one grand chain of love welds
His way to Heaven."

My feigned boldness could not last.
Why did I start and recoil at this voice?
My faint heart trembl'd as to condemn itself.
"The folly of my own imaginings
Will betray me," thought I.

But yet that terrible voice went on, —
"In Hell, torture is meted out to man
According to his sins. If in the garb
Of a saint he the Devil serves, then his
Punishment is doubly severe. He who
On Heaven his eyes have bent, then is doomed
To everlasting punishment, has double

Portion of pain to bear, double misery
Of Hell's torments to share.

“Man's days are o'ershadowed with the blessing
Or cursing of his life. The Power that shap'd thee
Made thee a free agent, thy form as temple
For the soul ; a place wherein to build
For lasting joys, or for future punishment.

“Man's pleasure should not come from hoarding
wealth ;
Worldly gains are but dross ; the grasping
Millionaire is poorer than the poor. He's
cursed !
Alone in the love of God is wealth ; it cheers
the soul and fills
Man with an eager desire to aid the weak.
This gracious inner longing to aid the poor

Is God-given balm, and drops refreshing
On man's soul like dews from Heaven upon
The with'ring leaf.

“ A God-loving man is a blessing ;
He comforts all within his reach, and bestows
Much charity upon the poor. One cannot
Be God-loving and selfish, too. 'Tis priceless
Riches, doing good ! The light of divinity
Shines through the good man's acts. The poor
thou
Mad'st live through all their days in poverty
Find in death no punishment ; nothing
Can deprive them of Heav'nly bliss, though like
As a curse thine iron hand of oppression
Crushed them while on earth.

“ When the Almighty fashioned thee in the
womb
Of life, filling thy breast with Heaven's gift,

Charity, setting his sacred seal on thy head
'To give the world assurance of a man,'
He expected gratitude for his labor
In thy help of fellow creatures. From thee,
Charity should have been heralded through
The land like rain ; ringing in love-notes
From hut to hovel, until echoing
Was heard and felt in ev'ry nook and corner
In the world. From thy hand, Charity should
Have gone forth assisting suff'ring humanity,
Protecting it from the ills of life,
As the mother hen her brood. Thou thought'st
by
Throttling commerce and bringing suffering
man
To thy feet, to be great ! Greatness does not
Come from that source in life. He who would
Be great is but a servant of the people.
Man can find no better employment than
To advance his brother's condition in life.

What hast thou done but strangled all love and
life?

See! whereon we float no shore we reach; no
Leaf, bird or man e'er greets us. Sweet life
from

The lap of earth ne'er more buds; plants, flow-
ers,

Twigs and trees are swept by thee into the
gulf

Of death. Dost thou call this poverty of soul,
Greatness? 'Would I bid thee impoverish thy-
self

To help fellow creatures?' No! 'tis writ,
'Man shall to himself no violence do.'"

"Oh!

This commandment I've been most faithful to,
Beloved and Righteous Ruler on high.
Not even the length or depth of a hair's
Breadth; not the tiniest nicety

Of a molecule's width, not the turning-point
Of one small iota, have I wavered
From this path of duty."

"He, who in any way against his neighbor
By malicious desire, or base intrigue
Doeth violence, shall inherit
The Kingdom of Hell!"

"Oh Thou, whose eyes command eternal space,
Search not my ways too close, for fear that I
might
Through a greed of gain, have sinned in thy
sight."

"Man must not take by pillage or by fraud
His neighbor's sustenance."

"Oh, Great and Most High," I prayed, "have
mercy

On me, thy child, floating on this fathomless
sea ;

Oh, forsake not this single soul, drifting

On, on, forever on, I know not where.

Thou who doth dwell within the spirit

Of all things, reach out a protecting hand

To me! Have mercy on my wretched state."

My heart did swell within me, and I felt

This shoreless stretch of wealth for which I'd
planned,

Had placed my soul in jeopardy.

If the world was mine, to what end was't
gained

If my soul was doomed to eternal pain?

Methought,

"Strange contrast to` my wretched mind's this
sea,

That like a liquid mirror calm is flowing,

The swift unfoldment of my future state
Comes o'er me like a plague.

"I'm cast like a man in the desert wild,
Wayward and trackless is the course ; all drear,
No cheer, no fruit, no flower doth him surround.
From me Hope's fled. I'm left on a barren
waste,
Revolving in the boundless blue of eternal space.
What a sad change is this that comes o'er my
fate!
Erewhile creation vast was too narrow
For my soul, now no place so small but I
Would hide."

"Thou should'st not
Have in any way intimidated
Fellow man ; should'st have left the avenues
Of trade open to all alike. Thou should'st
Have shunned conspiracy of ev'ry kind,

Especially that which would defeat honest
Toil. As thou hast conspired and injured
Fellow man, thou art doomed, and Heaven
Thou shalt not see ! ”

“ Oh Most High ! ” in anguish then I cried,
“ Have thou compassion on me, I pray thee,
On my knees beg I you sentence to stay,
Until here below I can penance do
That will save my soul.”

“ Dost thou once think,” replied the awful
voice,

“ Thou canst drown God’s soil, devastate, lay
waste

God’s whole domain with Petroleum Oil,
And not feel the hand of Justice on thee?
They, who of the great bounties of Nature
Have shared most lavishly and selfishly
Have kept the necessities of life away

From suffering man, must bide their time in
Hell.

“Hast thou helped the weak, or hast led the
blind

Or, hast converted the wisdom that God
Has given thee into base, selfish ends ;
Drowning not only man in all his sin,
But the beasts of the wood, and stifled
Birds of the air.

“Thou hast revolted ! turned
Traitor to God ! Swept away his flocks, drown’d
All earth that beat and palp’tated with life
And joy. You stole upon the secrets
Of the night when earth was in darkness
Crown’d when nature lay diffused in sleep ;
when
All was lulled to a quiet, unsuspecting
Rest, to the secret safety-valve of the world,

To touch was death to all but thee. From
Thy premeditated designs to drown
The world thou did'st build a bark, a craft
Of ingenious device, modeled to float
On Oil. When all was ready, in the dread
hour
Of the night, secretly you touched the valve
That deluged the world with Oil, then stole
away
For safety unto thy bark that lay moored
In Oil Creek, hard by, there, with an inner
Self-satisfied air watched the sad work
Of destruction go on until nature
Lay buried at thy feet. You've plucked the
sweets
From earth, the soul from man, blasted all life;
Sent the tide forever searching, never
Reaching a shore. The mighty ocean
That before naught but God could stay, as it
swept

Eternally on in a trackless swell,
Pointing to the great day when the fathomless
Depths should give up the dead, now lies a
prey
To thy wilful designs. The cataracts
That went pouring adown the mountain side
In dazzling splendor are no more.
How inferior is thy insignificance
To the great power that thy wanton hand
Has destroyed ! ”

“ Oh, stay thee ! ”

I cried, “ I can endure no more. I here
Invoke in thy presence, the Almighty
To lift this blubb’ry Oil from off the face
Of earth, and restore to drown’d man his life
Estates. Oh, give me but the power to purge
The innermost recesses of my soul, free
From sin by doing penance, and hereafter
I will live grand and pure as the ever

Filt'ring waters, till the irresistible
Current of time will have done with me here."

" All thy world in solemn gloom displays
A mocking contrast to better days ; days
Of life and cheer, of love, comfort, and hope
In Heaven. A deep, sad, solemn repose
Lays all around, no welcome sound, no voice
Invades this mighty deep ; nothing save
Reflected fancies of death. Dreadful sights
To compare with earth that was ! To satisfy
A greedy desire for gold, you wrought yourself
A tomb of fire ! This sea you reverence
As a god, will plague your life as pestilence
Did sinful man's when he at will roamed
O'er the sod. What say you ?
' You would but repent.'
Vain foolish man, there are no acts or words
Could purge your guilty soul all free from
sin ! "

“ But should I yield to you my Oil, all my Possessions, my power, what then?”

“ You have no
Lasting possessions, no power, but life,
And that you’ve cursed by greed of gain, cut off
Your own enjoyment by selfish ends.
Consider, — what is wealth?
Is’t Gold? Oil? No! no!
A kindly hand and a cheerful heart, a clear
Conscience, honest efforts; faith and love
In an Over-ruling Power; such is
An everlasting wealth, a foundation
For an eternal life. What are riches
In gold, in Oil, compared unto this?
Though you possess the whole, you get nothing
But what you eat, drink, and wear; you are as
poor
As a beggar, with all this world at your feet.
Ah, man! man! thy life is vain; the days thou

Should'st end in peace, thou shalt end in pain,
Then pain follows pain. The vital air of sin
Environs thee, this gloating poison in your
Soul that's plucked God's and man's harvest,
will end

Thy days in shame. When thou yield'st this
mortal

Breath and wing to the sable shades of dishonor,
While sitting in grief, with trembling mien,
such

Pains, aches, and horrid sights thine eyes will
behold

Thou wilt rebel against thine own lost soul
For thy past atroc'ties to man ; there beg
And plead for mercy in the most pitiful
Lamentations. All comforts of life
That's past will rise before thee as mocking
Visions ; thy home comforts, all that thou most
Desired in earthly life will pest thee with
A mocking counterpart of their reality.

Mountains of gold will rush past thee, produc-
ing

An eager longing for their possessions ;
Taunting pictures of bonds, stocks, will feast
thy

Greedy sight to a bitter disappointment.

Thy brain will register sweet images

Of quiet, while Hell's torments will fill

Thy frame with unrelenting pain. Od'rif'rous

Plants that on earth thou most enjoyed, you'll
see

In Hell ; when you do but seek their arbors,

They will yield such a revolting stench, with

Nausea and purging you will flee.

The shades of Hell are so hot the flesh becomes

Crisp and cracks ; great chunks break off, leav-
ing bare

The bone that filters the marrow through its

Pores, burning like unto a small blue flame

From an unconsuming gas jet.

“What! pardon? No! no!
As thou through all thy life thus far hast moved
An enemy to God and man, thy future
Is firm fixed; there is no law that can change
The decree; the mandate of Heav’n’s gone forth,
And the authorities of Paradise
Have attested to thy fate. Hell’s thy future
Home. Do I think there is a chance for you?
Thy chance of Heav’n doth as poorly sit
As does thy dead earth to bloom with life again.”

As these last words were spoken, he vanished.
Lo! then forth came on the wave’s crest
Grinning skulls with ugly sightless eyes!
These horrid maggots so wrought in my brain
That at every glance I gave, they seemed
To expand and distort into ten thousand shapes,
Sending a horror through my frame, as if
Some energetic power from Hell’s core
Was throbbing in my heart.

“Father of Mercy!” I cried,
“I, thy humbled child, bow me down crushed
In spirit to pray; my hopes are fled, unless
Thee my poor chained soul will but hear and
heed.

I pray for those that 'neath my feet lowly lie;
Those whose tortured souls deep in Hell do languish;

Oh take them to thy realms of bliss on high!
Lift me from my wretched state, and pity me,
Father, for Pity's sake.”

Then, methought, an icy chill
Convulsed my frame. It now seemed freezing
cold,
Yet 'twas not winter. “It must be,” said I,
“The law of Nature has o'erleaped itself
And fallen back into the arms of Frost,
Or why this pale, sickly look! Wherefore this
numbing

Cold, erewhile so warm and serene?" This
seemed

Most strange, and yet to me it was real.

As the cold increased,

Great peaks of the highest mountains loomed up,

Through the congealing Oil ; barren and bleak

They stood, shrouded in winding sheets of snow,

As monuments to the dead world.

Silently the fabric of my Dream

Arose in pure transparent peaks of ice,

Till Frost had locked the world in solidity.

I gazed mournfully on this scene, shiv'ring

And shaking, as was my congealing blood

Slowly sealing up the channels of life.

That dread empire, Frost, had now closed all

Resources of Nature. I'd nothing to do

But wait. Living, I silent stood within

My ice-bound tomb.

Every hour I noted

The dissipation of heat. Frost
Glistened in the sun's warmless rays. All light
And heat were but as a drear mockery
To the time.

Blocks of ice roofed by flakes of snow
Environed me. There was nothing but ice,
Crag and peaks of ice! All was a drear waste
Of bleak despair. My heart sickened. turned
cold,
And lay like lead in its cerements. Thought I,
"Nature is a tomb, a blank monument
To what has been. Her spirit of life's fled.
I, alone, stand mid this wreck and ruin,
Forlorn. Darkness sits brooding in my soul;
I wait the coming of I know not what,
I trust that it may be joy, but alas,
I fear eternal sorrow."

The waning moon shone in pitiful paleness

Above the cloud-tipped pyramids of ice ;
Winds, in doleful sounds and mournful cadence
Swept ever through my useless rigging.
My life was as death, drear, cold, and barren.
My stagnant blood went shivering backward
To its source ; my soul was hopeless and forlorn.
There were no joyous thoughts to give me cheer,
For blasted hopes there came no welcome sound.

I was sick of life which bore no fruit for me,
Mem'ry pierced my heart with pictures of the
past.

The running brook, the church upon the hill,
On them to think my eyes with tears did fill.
No more a joy, was life to me, below,
My spirit was bleeding o'er its wretched state,
My shaft, then flying from the golden past
Aimed for death's river quiv'ring on the blast.
Hell sure was gaping wide before my eyes.
I was loth to die, and was loth to live.

Life or death (if my choice I could but take),
I knew not which, so wretched was my state.

“Oh God of Love!” I prayed, “one boon but
grant

To me; roll back the years till I clasp
Mother’s knee, and let my yearning eyeballs
Once more trace the smiles, joys and shadows
Upon her sweet face. Oh, but let me die
On her dear breast! I’d lived a goodly time
When I her bosom pressed.

“But no! no! no! this never can so be.
Ah, well! soon from this living death I’ll flee.
All around the wind of Death has blown,
While mighty swaths the scythe of Time hath
mown.”

As I stood bemoaning my sad fate,
I thought to feel a breath of temp’rate air

Fan soft my cheek ; a hundred changes came
O'er my face, while a thousand swept my soul.
My heart, anon so cold, now burned with the
 fire
Of youth ; with joy I paced the smooth surface
Of my ice-girt ship.

I noted the blubbery Oil take shape,
And marked the mountain peaks disappear,
As the Oil expanded to the sun's heat ;
I rejoiced as I floated once again
A thing of life.

As the airy heat danced and quivered
Over my face, touching as with a balm
My frost-nipped soul, I gazed about with de-
 light
On the broad bosom of my em'rald sea,
While the sun's warm rays went quivering
 down

The Arctic cope of Heaven. I could picture
In the sky the fair mirage of a verdant rivage ;
Castles towering on the peak of some beetling
bluff,

Contending armies in deadly combat
For its supremacy ; sabres gleaming
In air ; fleecy clouds issuing smoke-like
As from heavy guns, while in the distance
Was heard a low mutt'ring sound, then dense
and black

The angry sky was seen ; as lightnings leaped
And quiv'red through the dun clouds, thunders
burst

Forth in tremendous explosions making
The eternal space of Heaven tremble
To its base.

The lightning blue from the torrent's blast
Shivered, rent in twain my stately mast,
And shot its zigzag streaks of vivid Hell

Thwart the Oily flood, crash on crash, pell-mell.
I thought that Nature's day, and all was done,
That earth to the fiery fiend must succumb.

"Father Omnipotent!" I cried, "make Thou
The lightning to but stay its course, or far
From my combustible sea spend its force."

My voice was smothered as burst the blackened
Heav'ns in tongues of fire and harsh confusion.
The elements battling with dire alarms
Shook the sky, chafing it with streaks of 'lectric
Light, making doubly terrible the black'ned
Night. The hurling thunders rolled from pole
to pole,
Trembling the earth as fear quaked my soul;
Red thunderbolts seemed to environ me,
I would but escape! Where could I flee?
"What horrid death," thought I, "if in this Oil
The electric spark should fly!"

Then the forked lightning rent asunder
The black'ned sky ; 'twas like a snake with
hellish

Venomed tongue darting at ev'ry object
That it would shun. It split the clouds in twain,
And then, into the green sea it went.
Far and farther fire licked the liquid main,
Till flaming ramparts arose like walls ;
To escape all efforts vain. What could strife
Avail when the devouring element sought
The consuming of my life ?

The curling flames upward leaped and licked the
stars,
That like rockets in the darkest night downward
Fell, bursting, begemming all the Heavens
With jewels of light. The Oily sea before
Me lay a sheet of flame, a bed of fire ;
A counterpart of Hell's desire !
Satan, sure, must have swept the skies with his

Flaming wheel, no other power would have
Wrought this scene of woe. "Earth," thought

I, "cannot

Withstand this tide of flame, melting she must
Float a metallic flood, or bursting, in space
Find an ignoble grave." Round and round
The mighty cauldron boiled, seething and hissing
Till, shudd'ring, the earth to her very poles
Convulsive shook.

Then a whirling, eddying blast of fire
And stifling smoke enshrouded me. "Oh,
God!"

I groan'd in agony, "shield me, I pray Thee,
From this frightful death." Soon the scathing
Flames my spars did lick, oh! those livid
tongues,
Of Hell, how they stuck! They cringed like a
cur
At my feet, yet repelled every effort,

All means defeated to quench their hot thirst ;
Ever becoming stronger and fiercer
By what they fed on.

Anon,

My vessel's course was stayed, her masts, they
fell !

Nowhere could I flee. Then, as if to make
Existence still more appalling, Hell's
Dumb reptiles took shelter along with me.
Over my flesh their cringing bodies crawled,
From heat distilling pois'nous ooze. Their
shrieks

Of pain mocked my own sad doom. I prayed
God

To "end this torture dire ! to quench this life
Of mine, or extinguish this mad fire."

Then methought,

Those souls that I supposed were in the Pool,

(And of all I most earnestly wished there),
The Producers and Independent Refiners
Peered at me from Heaven and heard my
Supplications. I could have endur'd anything
But this ; that they should enjoy Heav'n's high
estate

While I in torture pent, was more than Hell's
Punishment. Oh, it was too much ! I prayed
That the red flames would devour me outright,
That I might be fore'er hidden from their sight.
To see and know the very men in life
Whose exaltations I opposed, whose sway
I checked, and whose very persons I loathed
With consummate hatred were dignified
In Heav'n unto a perfect unity
With angelic life, was more than nature
Could endure. My heart swelled and wellnigh
burst

With its grief and mortification. Ay,
My very hair seemed like hot irons

Goadings, burning, and searing my tortured
Brain, so horrible was my Dream-wrought
Punishment.

Methought a railway train was running through
The windings of my nature. I could feel
The red-hot coals singe and burn my soft flesh,
As in languid curves through the ways of my
Vile and crooked life it forced slow its way.

Then the world went rocking, heaving, sway-
ing,

In convulsions, till fissures grav'tating
To the earth's centre opened up, taking
In seas of Oil to be vomited forth
In volumes of flames and heat that melted
The earth's substance into molten liquid.
Then lowering clouds that hung low with
floods
Of water burst their cerements, letting forth

Their contents into the earth-centring
Crevices. Like as to a boiler
From over-pressure of steam explodes,
Did the earth in atoms shoot forth in space.

Then,
Methought, my soul in a new form winged
forth ;
Fearful of the falling débris it sped
As a thief from Justice. So fast I flew
The world's chaos of bones and coffin-cinders
Soon fell behind my swift expanse of flight.
On I flew ! past countless myr'ads of solar
Systems ; on, on beyond this wilderness
Of worlds till the galaxy of Heaven
Was hid from view. On, so deep into
The abyss of distance that the sun's rays
Gleamed ghost-like amid the sable shades
Of suburban Hell.

Down into this illim'table dungeon
Of hoary blackness I long stood gazing
With useless eyes, till they starting seemed to
burst

From their sockets. I could see, not with eyes,
Yet with other senses which were so acute
That all Hell's horrid creatures seemed before
me.

I trembling prayed to the Prince of Darkness
For but a moiety of my former peace ;
But alas ! he laughed my supplications
To scorn.

Then the scene was sadly changed ; with its
change

There was increase of pain. The intense heat
Sapped the marrow from my bones, elicited
From me low stifled moans ; still was I loth
For the Independent Oil men to know
What I suffered deep down in the dark confines

Of the damned, and slinking crawled behind
A projecting rock to hide.
Then, methought, my sight was cleared with
euphrasy,
And I met monopolists, stock-jobbers,
Railroad kings, murderers, thieves, incendiaries,
And vile leaders of political rings !
Men with subtlety and guile in their souls.
I tried to flee from them as from a ghost,
But I could not escape. These double-tongued
Dev'ls proclaimed me leader of their hellish
Train.

Such horrid sounds and sights,
Of infernal hue came from this damned pit
I shudder whenever I think of it !
There were offsprings of pride, in life, honored,
In Hell blaspheming their names.

I saw all the Stygian sufferings

Portrayed in the sins of those creatures, Ay,
And felt the pangs myself. My throat was
parched

With heat; I could hear and see trickling
streams

At a distance; great cakes of ice were before
My sight. I yearned for them, I rushed for
them

Through dim vapory mists of scalding dew,
Yet nearer unto them I never drew.

I could see broad lakes, lashing their waves
'gainst

The massive rocks, sending their milk-white
spray

High in space, as if to augment my thirst.

As on I sped, my parched tongue hung
As if to catch descending drops of spray;
No moisture fell save to blister, as it touched.
On I flew till my agonizing pains

Burst forth in horrid shrieks that went echoing
Terrific through the sable vaults of Hell.

“Oh!” cried I, “if I were but on earth again,
I would treat all mankind as my equals.
I’d earn an honest living as did just men.
I would not let railroads discriminate
In my favor ’gainst the people’s interest,
But if honestly I should amass wealth
Beyond any reasonable demand,
I’d help the cripple ’long the way of life,
That he also in his turn might give aid
To whomsoe’er he might.”

Then, methought, I came to a lake of Oil
That looked very like old Bradford stock sub-
jected
To a high pressure of Hell’s heat, seemingly
Undergoing a distillation. At first
I became somewhat interested, and watched

The smooth surface of the Oil, as, like a mirror
It shone, reflecting the little globules
Of vapor, that rose and floated to the utmost
Height, roofed and walled in by Hell, condens-
ing,

Fell back to repeat again the e'er revolving
Process like as to the continuous
Distillation of a Van Sycle Still.

The vapory globules mingling, so blended
With the substance of Hell as to make
Sulphuretted hydrogen, emitting
An offensive odor like unto decomposed
Eggs. This produced such a nausea that I,
Stifling, searched for a manhole through which
to 'scape, it

Seeming as if I was enclosed in a heated Still.
But this means of exit being fastened
I bethought of, and rushed for, the Vapor-pipes,
Squeezed through with the venomous odors
And escaped by the way of the Tail-house,

Through a two-inch pipe, thinking to elude
My difficulties, but 'stead enhanced
Them, for I encountered Lucifer,
And trusting to the endurance and speed
Of my tried pinions sought to escape him by
flight,
The while making fiendish faces at, and
Letting forth tones of mocking satire
That greatly incensed him. He, with resent-
ment strong,
In hot pursuit forth sped to chase me down
And flay my flesh. To see the visage
Of Lucifer in rage, terror seized me
And I regretted my rash step. What could
I do but flee? To sue for mercy was vain,
So I put forth all efforts to escape.
This goaded Lucifer to his utmost speed,
And we both like lightning flew, I with fear
Which nerved me to the task, Lucifer in wrath
To chastise me. The imps as if mocking

Spurred their leader to the chase until to me
He closer drew, not within arm's reach, how-
ever,
But with bearded tail outstruck, laying my flesh
Open to the bone from hip to shoulder.
I, from force of the blow, being disabled
Could not farther flee, so about forth turned,
With tooth and nail seized upon Lucifer,
It being my only chance, trusting
To o'er-power him. Close embraced we both
Downward fell into the boiling Pool ;
Lucifer being undermost sunk beneath
The surface, and strangling straight sought
breath ;
This separated us and he
Forth swimming left me, helpless, crippled
In the heated lava that coursed through my
wound
Inflicted sores until I burst forth in shrieks
Of pain for help ! This devil heeded me not

Until he reached the shore, then sent his imps
To bring me unto him, and like as
A porous plaster adheres to hair and flesn,
Lucifer glued me to his side, addressing me-
thus :

“ I am Prime Minister

Unto his Satanic Majesty,
Sent by him to judge you by impartial
Scrutiny as to the enormity
Of your fallacious guile.”

I implored his Lordship,
“ To deal with due consideration with me.
To think I prayed him, of the souls I'd launched
Into his care by drowning the world with Oil ! ”
Said I, “ Through me you've received many
souls
That would otherwise have reformed and gone
The primrose way to Heaven.”

“ Yes! yes!” said he, “ this is all very true,
But you seem to forget that in drowning
The world, you’ve extinguished all life thereon,
Thus ruined all my prospects from that sphere.
You’ve stopped a resource of souls that for
 millions
Of years would have been the recipients
Of my spleen !

“ Yes! ninety per cent would have come to me.
From that small world I was getting more souls
Than from all the rest of my territory.
Not that alone, you have quite disheartened
The devils that I had on earth recruiting
Souls for the Stygian Pool. Now, as they
Are out of service they are rioting
Through the bowels of Hell most disgracefully.
And you, you alone, are responsible
For all this trouble.”

Thus conversing, it was not long before my
Curiosity was aroused by loud
Noises hard by, looking, in horrid shapes
I saw all the usurers of earth, towards
Me move. Straight terror convulsed me lest
they
Should break their bonds and seize upon me, but
Viewing closer their tumultuary
Proceedings, I was soon convinced that they
were
In parley o'er the rate of interest
To exact for some imaginary loan.
There were no transactions, but dreadful phan-
toms
Of, in their imaginings. Here, I saw
All frailties of life confusedly thrown
Together ; God-mocking christians ; no charity,
No love but for self. Men with beastly
Appetites for drink ; men so penurious
They were dishonest, petty thieves. It seemed all

The immortal venom of earth together
Like worms through the lust of sin in pain
And contention were crawling.

Torrents of shrieks and moans
In tumults of unrelenting pain greeted me.
Horrors horrid came welling up to my sight
From this pit of infamy. Black Sin,
Scathed and scarred in weltring, misshap'n
souls
Was before me. "Oh!" thought I, "what a
curse
Hangs o'er this frightful region." As I stood
Spellbound, Lucifer asked, "Why on those souls
I so long gazed?" I answered, "I know not
Save from pity." Said he, "While on earth
they were
Vile wretches of the lowest order
And deserve not pity. You need all your
Inborn sympathy for self." Then, methought

A venomous snake with forked tongue shot
Darting pains through my loins as it coiled
About me. Clammy scales crept slowly
O'er my flesh, and I, shudd'ring, griped with
frenzy

The snake's protruding head, squeezing until
It lifeless fell at my feet prone down.
Then it seemed I had strangled a creature
Human! one most fair. I, shrieking, tried to
escape,
But to Lucifer seemed close bound;
And could not stir! The horror of my posi-
tion

Was inexpressible. Fast stayed o'er my
Bloody work my revolting soul must soon
Have lost its reason but for Lucifer's
Shutting from my ken this aspect horrible,
And I gave forth a sigh like one relieved
From pain. Mid all this darkness Lucifer
Signified his pleasure and he leading,

We both winged like bats through the blackened
void

Until of a sudd'n we alighted on a projecting
Rock that low'ring o'erhung a lake of sin.
My sight here being restored I directed
My gaze to a scene the most of all I would
But shun.

Directly in our front, methought
I saw my royal crew of earth welt'ring
In a pool of burning Oil, that stank so like
Lima stock but for the torments
And visible presence of Lucifer
I surely must have thought me on earth.
These godless wretches seemed wading in this
Burning Oil to their armpits, the wound-inflict-
ing
Flames in fest'ring horrors marked their features.
As to each in turn I my gaze directed,
They seemed most faithful unto their old

Employer and employment, for with
Uplifted hand above my ken to make sure
My focus one I beheld in scrolls of flame
Writing, as if working on some private
Papers. He should have passed unknown but
for his

Writing (so awful was his flame-eaten flesh) ;
I knew it well ; not alone that, however,
The dazzling real'ty of base transactions
That on earth were secrets between us, now stood
Out in letters of flame, as startling
As Belshazzar's writing on the wall.
This double-hoofed devil exposing my
Secrets incensed me. Then I saw menials
That I'd paid on earth as spies, in close
Communion, as if o'er some mean matter
Of weighty importance were debating ;
Planning some diabolical scheme
To entrap the Independent Refiners.
They all did sigh sore-tortured, save one, and he

Was a lean, hungry, Cassius-looking cur,
So black in visage that mid the darkness
Of the pit, him around all seemed white.
As he thus sat, emitting flame from his
Steel-plated nostrils he evinc'd an enjoyment
That a veteran would experience
In smoking a fragrant Havana
After long abstemiousness. I had fear
Of him, however valuable to me
On earth to assist in doing my secret work.
"He is a Judas," said I to myself,
"Should he see me he would betray me, his
Old master ; should he outspcak or laugh,
It would most damaging be to my cause,
That I'm before His Highness pleading."
So I slunk back as if to hide, but he,
Seeing this movement, defined my motive
And leading, they all laughed with a horrid
Hellish meaning that unto Lucifer
Exposed my position, for he after,

Close eyed me with a suspiciousness that
Bespoke eternal vigilance on my
Movements.

In glancing around o'er this assemblage
Of incarnate fiends, I could not recall
One of all my many partners or employees
But what were here. I, thinking them
Good, likely fellows, asked Lucifer about
This crew. (I'd thought in drowning them to
send
Them to Heav'n to bless me, 'stead they were
here
To curse me.) In brief he replied :

“ The reason of this is
That all Monopolists and whosoe'er
Encourages their work, or profits from
This base mode of money making, their souls
Are Satan's.”

“ Great Lucifer, if so you feel inclined .
Impart to me who are those wretched souls
Whose faces front this way, even now ?
Those whose forms are stooping low hard by
where
That black fruitage grows that’s pois’nous,
deadly
To the taste. Those corporal festerings
That stand close, but all sep’rate from my crew,
Writhing, fast stayed in the earth as if like seeds
They grew rooted to the sod? Such tortures
Are in their mien they sure are some doomed
Immortals for bloody sins on earth,
To thee committed.”

But Lucifer, straight answering, said,
“ No, they are not for murder held but for
Controlling the Trusts of earth and in
Advancing prices on staple products
Made hungry many a deserving mouth.

None of this class escaped us, we had them
Registered for our keeping long before
They left the mortal form. No death-bed
Repentance could shield them from their just
Punishment ; and thou mighty leader
Of Monopoly and Trusts shall feel doubly
The inflicting torments of Hell."

" Oh Great One !
Change thou the spirit of thy proem,
And let fall lightly upon me thy wrath.
On earth I revered thee unknown to the Church.
I keep nothing from thee, I am for thee.
Have compassion on me, thy co-worker."

But Lucifer replied,
" Your greedy calculations of selfishness
Being subversive unto holiness
Has caused your downward fall to sable shades,
'Stead of rising to ulterior perfection.

We like this malicious working in souls,
But yours is too sordid ; it has a horrid
Effect over our reign of contention.
And thus 'tis an everlasting disgust
Sums up all previous dealings with you.
You now come here with a supple spirit
And laudable craftiness that would do
Great credit to his Satanic Majesty,
Waiting for the first opportunity
That presents itself to seize on Satan's
Substance and then convert it into
A Monopoly.

“ Hell teems with souls
Of both noble and ignoble extraction,
But there is not one within my keeping
That's as base and hollow-hearted as thou !
There hangs a curse about thy neck that would
Set Hell groaning 'neath its weight ; thou hast
More arts of cunning than would cheat Satan

Out of his throne. I am after thee
So be wary, for on thee I'll vent my spleen."

"Noble Lucifer!" I cried, "on my weak
spirit

Vent not your royal malice that with fear
Like a shadow's now trembling before you.
I'll abdicate my Sea of Oil to you
And pipe it to the nether depths of all,
If thou'lt but let me off."

"Vile dissembler!

Do you think to stand in false light to Satan,
As you have to God's people, by saying
You'll abdicate your Oil and pipe it to Hell?
Base deceiver, think'st I know not thy world
Is no more? I know all thy treachery
Unto man; thy crooked ways in life
Are no secret to me.

“Thou thought’st to reach the resplendent
summit

Of primeval glory by displaying
A false face. Throw by the mask and stand
forth,

Stamped for the red consuming penal fires.

I know thee for what thou art, a devil
In the guise of an angel! The spirits
Of Hell shall seize thee.”

Oh! what agony tore my soul, as upon
The utmost heights of a barren perpendicular
Rock, by winding paths and gorges deep-laid,
He dragged me. I closed my eyes to shut
out

The aspect horrible that before me
Lay. From the abyss deep down, weltering
In their lust, wrangled crooked perverse mon-
sters

Of Hell, whose jaws kept working

With scissor-like movement to catch my tremb-
ling

Bulk, then suspended in space by this devil
Lucifer.

As I passed slowly, surely
To my doom how I did plead for mercy.
But Lucifer scoffed at my prayers and said,
“I give your body unto the reptiles
Of the damned, and your soul to nether depths
Of all.”

Oh ! then, methought those slimy reptiles rent
And tore the flesh from off my bones, leaving
My soul bare, naked ; shiv'ring with Fear's
cold,
Amid Hell's heat.

Minutes passed like years in this tortured sleep,
Until, amid unbearable horrors .

I awoke to find my sinewy form
Low bent, hair bleached to snowy whiteness.

Time passes slowly on,
But yet no rest my soul doth find, such torments
Gave my Petroleum Dream !



